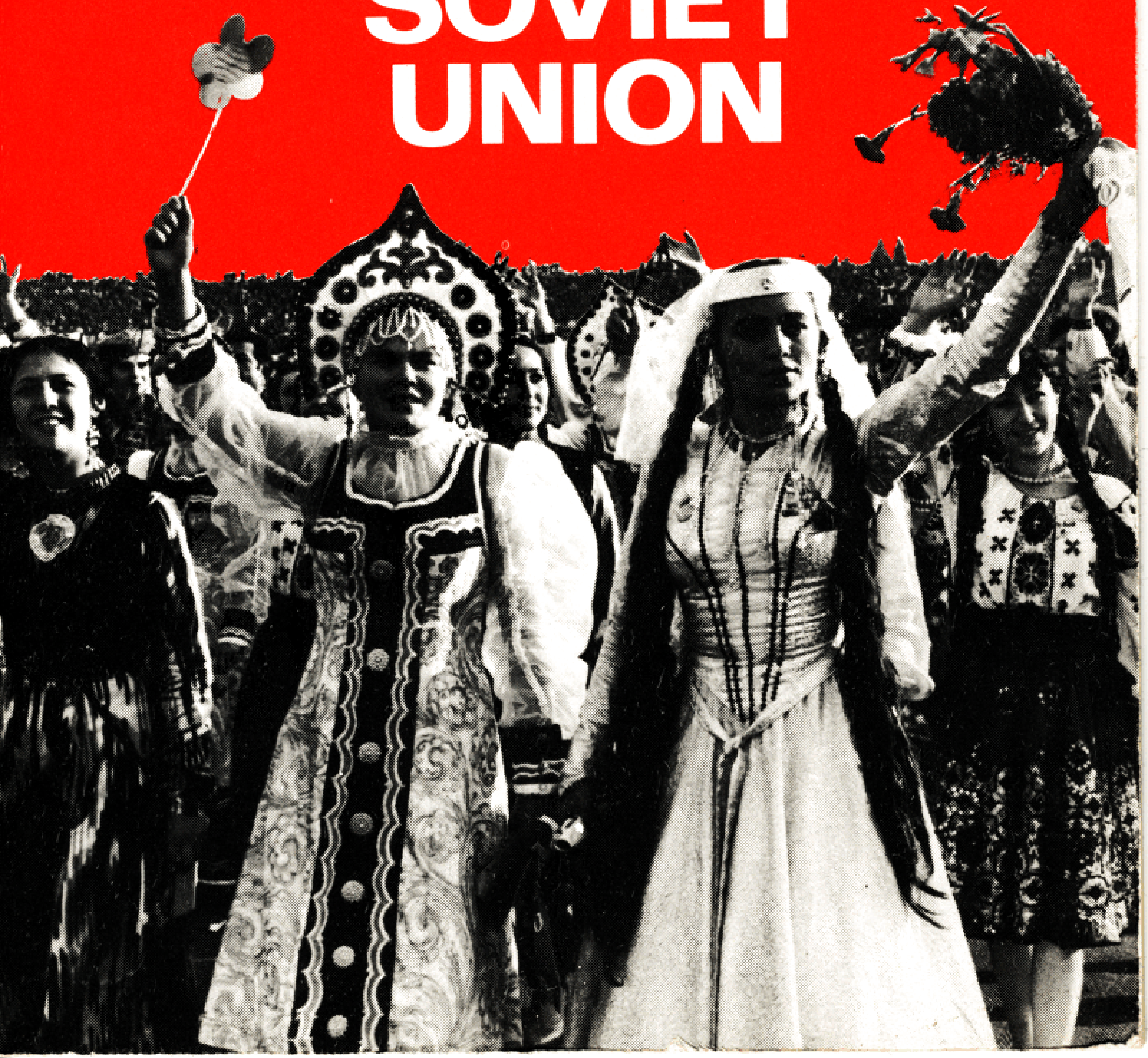
The African Communist

NO91 FOURTH QUARTER 1982

SIXTY YEARS OF THE SOVIET UNION



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BANTUSTAN THREAT TO AFRICAN UNITY

Earlier this year the Botha regime was reported to have entered into an agreement with King Sobhuza for the incorporation into Swaziland of the kaNgwane Bantustan in the Transvaal and the Ingwavuma region of kwaZulu, thus ridding South Africa at a stroke of a further million or more African citizens (and in the process doubling the population of Swaziland). The agreement was entered into behind the backs of the African people of all the territories involved, and has been bitterly opposed by the chief ministers of kaNgwane and kwaZulu. In fact kaNgwane's chief minister Enos Mabuza was stripped of his office and the kaNgwane Legislative Assembly dissolved by the Botha regime in a bid to silence opposition to the transfer, and the government seems determined to go ahead despite the court actions against it. For his part kwaZulu chief minister Buthelezi has warned that if the plan is implemented, blood could flow and "Ingwavuma could become South Africa's Lebanon".

The intention of the Botha regime is clear. On the one hand it aims to rid itself of a million unwanted African citizens, for whom Swaziland would have to accept responsibility, though their availability for work in South Africa as migratory labourers would remain undiminished. Secondly, a new buffer state would be created between Mozambique and South Africa which the Botha regime hopes would hamper the work of the liberation movement. Thirdly, new pressure would be exerted on Buthelezi to accept the "independence" of kwaZulu if he did not want to see further excisions from his fiefdom — this piece might be given to Lesotho, that to the Transkei etc. Other non-independent Bantustans might feel similarly threatened. Fourthly — and most serious of all — this transfer of population might bring with it international recognition if accepted by Swaziland, which is an independent state with a seat at the OAU and the United Nations.

Such recognition would undermine the international refusal to recognise the existing "independent" Bantustans, and might open the way for further incorporation of South African territory into neighbouring states vulnerable to pressure from South Africa. Swaziland would inevitably become enmeshed in Botha's proposed "constellation of Southern African states" based on the Bantustans. The proposed inclusion of Kosi Bay in the area to be ceded to Swaziland raises the equally disturbing prospect that this area on the Indian Ocean seaboard could be developed as a naval base for use by Western and South African navies.

In a strongly worded memorandum to the government of Swaziland, the National Executive of the African National Congress points out that the proposed transfer of land and population to Swaziland violates the principle of the OAU that national boundaries should not be redrawn "except by free and mutual consent between the countries and peoples involved". The proposed transfer, says the statement, gravely undermines the cause of African unity and gives rise to the possibility of fratricidal strife among the African people. This fits in perfectly with the divide and rule strategy of the apartheid regime and can only serve to extend the lease of life of this regime".

Pointing out that the Royal House of Swaziland had been among the founding fathers of the ANC who in 1912 had voted to "bury the demon of tribalism" and work for the unity of the African people, the ANC memorandum says:

> "We would consider it highly regrettable that Swaziland should, at this late hour, set herself apart from the rest of the African people of our region by breaking with the tradition described above, by electing to separate the Swazi-speaking population of South Africa from the rest of the African population of our country by joining hands with the apartheid regime in carrying out a policy which aims at transforming South Africa into a white man's country by declaring the African people aliens in the country of their birth".

In his speech to the federal congress of the Nationalist Party called at the end of July to discuss his plans for "power-sharing" with the Coloured and Indian people, Premier Botha made it clear that he intends to press ahead with the Bantustanisation of the African people. The regime has already gone a long way on this road.

Population Statistics

At the end of July, 1982, the Department of Statistics in Pretoria released a preliminary report on the results of the 1980 census showing the total population of the country as 24,885,960. Of this total 16.9 million were Africans, 4.5 million whites, 2.6 million Coloureds and 821,320 Indians. These figures should be compared with those issued by the Department of Statistics in 1976, giving the mid-year population as 26,129,000, comprising 18,629,000 Africans, 4,320,000 whites, 2,434,000 Coloureds and 746,000 Indians. It will be noted that all sections of the population had increased between 1976 and 1980 except the Africans, whose numbers had been diminished by the grant of "independence" to Transkei in 1976, Bophuthatswana in 1977, and Venda in 1979. The official total of the African population has been reduced still further as a result of the "independence" foisted on Ciskei at the end of 1981.

The African populations of these territories is now unknown. They are not included in the South African census, being regarded as foreigners, and none of the "independent" Bantustans has yet conducted its own census. Yet most of them were born and bred in South Africa — in fact most of them in so-called "white" South Africa — where they still live and work. Their number may be as high as 10 million, possibly more — in 1976 the official figures were: Xhosa-speaking Africans 4,897,000 (now citizens of either Transkei or Ciskei), Tswana 2,103,000, Venda 449,000. The 1980 census showed that the percentage growth rates of the population between 1970 and 1980 were: whites 1.7%, Coloureds 2.2%, Indians 2.4% and Africans 2.5%, though it should be added that in 1980 the Department of Statistics, while supplying figures of birth and death rates for whites, Coloureds and Indians, gave no figures for Africans, stating they were "not available".

It is because the white population of South Africa is shrinking steadily in relation to the black that the white racists have embarked on their lunatic Bantustan scheme. A report issued by the Human Sciences Research Council in April 1982 showed that the white birthrate, which stood at 33 per 1,000 in 1910, was down to 23 in 1973 and dropped sharply to 16 in 1979. By the year 2000 the whites are expected to number only 11% of the total population. Like ostriches, the white racists think that if they stick black heads in the ground nobody will see their bodies. They have already reduced South Africa's African population by, say, 10 million by granting "independence" to Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana and Venda. In 1982 a kwaNdebele Flag Act was passed through the South African Parliament amidst predictions that the Bantustan will become "independent" within five years, and increasing pressure is being brought to bear on other Bantustan leaders to accept "independence". In the end, as Dr Connie Mulder predicted while he was still Minister of Bantu Affairs, "if our policy (of separate development) is taken to its logical conclusion there will be not one black man with South African citizenship".

On paper the whites will then be the biggest single "tribe" in South Africa, and thus in their view morally entitled to rule the roost, despite the fact that overwhelming numbers of black "foreigners" will be all around them, in their homes and factories, down their mines — in fact, everywhere they are now, only more so.

A Form of Genocide

It is trite to say it would be funny if it were not so tragic. The fact is that the exclusion of Africans from South African citizenship is not only naked robbery but a form of genocide. At a stroke millions of people who have helped build South Africa into the economic giant it is, are denied the fruits of their labour, denied access to the very land on which they were born. They have no further right to call on South Africa's social services, even their pensions are jeopardised. The millions rotting in the resettlement camps without jobs or land, piped water or sanitation, electric light or any of the other amenities of civilisation are dying like flies. Because they are citizens of a "foreign" state, South AFrican accepts no responsibility for them. South Africa's view is that, if an "independent" African dies of malnutrition in his Bantustan, it is his government which is to blame for the conditions in which he was forced to live, not the Botha regime. If thousands of dissidents in the "independent" Bantustans are detained without trial for indefinite periods, or killed by Bantustan police while under interrogation about their trade union activities in "white", South Africa, Botha merely spreads his hands and pleads "Not guilty. Our policy is not to interfere in the internal affairs of neighbouring countries". No matter that the security services of all the "independent" Bantustans are controlled from Pretoria, that key posts in the civil services of these territories are occupied by white South Africans, that the whole apparatus of "independence" — the new capital cities, the development schemes, such as they are, the expensive houses and motor cars of the stooge chiefs etc. — is paid for from the South African exchequer. The official South African attitude remains one of non-responsibility.

Just how artificial is the attempt to separate the "independent" Bantustans is revealed in the sphere of health, for disease knows no boundary while migratory labour flourishes. Last year, according to official figures, nearly 100,000 people in South Africa and the Bantustans were hit by a range of diseases whose origin is poverty, including cholera, typhoid, diphtheria, leprosy, rabies, measles, tuberculosis, viral hepatitis, polio, tetanus and trachoma. Many of these diseases have reappeared, after a lapse of many years, because of deteriorating conditions in the rural areas where hundreds of thousands have the services neither of doctors nor of hospitals or clinics. Only about 2% of our health budget is spent on preventive medicine, while 95% of South Africa's doctors practise in urban areas where doors are being closed ever more tightly against the African people.

United Action

The crisis over the proposed transfer of land to Swaziland opens up the possibility of building a united front for effective action to frustrate the implementation of Botha's Bantustan plans, not only in relation to Ingwavuma and kaNgwane but throughout South Africa. Steps have already been taken by the ANC and other bodies representative of the people involved to unite their forces in opposition to the Swaziland transfer, and we can be certain of one thing — if they mobilise the people on a mass scale they can halt the Botha regime in its tracks. A promising start has been made. ANC leaflets calling for a "rifle-to-rifle" fight against the South African regime have been distributed throughout the affected Bantustans, and mass protest rallies have been attended by tens of thousands. The African people are making it plain that they are prepared to fight to preserve the unity of the country and its people and open the way to democratic advance.

All can now see that the Bantustan policy, with its rationale of "divide and rule", is the most dangerous weapon in the armoury of the enemy. The creation of each Bantustan, however artificial it may seem, makes the achievement of unity in action of the African people and their allies more difficult. The whole process must be halted and reversed before irreparable damage is done to our prospects of building a free, united and democratic South Africa.

ISRAEL'S HOLOCAUST IN LEBANON

Israel justifies its murderous policies towards Lebanon and other Arab countries in the Middle East on the grounds that the Jews have been the victims of persecution and discrimination throughout the ages and are entitled to "defend" themselves. It is important to recognise, however, that Israel and the Jewish people are not synonymous, and that it is the conduct of the state of Israel which makes it possible to be anti-Israel without being anti-Semitic. In fact, one can argue today that nothing has done more to excite anti-Semitism throughout the world than the barbarous aggression of the Begin government under the pretext of defending Jewish interests.

Israel was set up in terms of a UN resolution of 1947 providing for the establishment on the territory of Palestine of two independent states, one Arab and one Jewish and declaring Jerusalem to be an international city. The Jewish state was to comprise 14,000 square kilometres or 56 per cent of the total area of Palestine, while 43 per cent was allocated to the Arabs and 0.6 per cent to Jerusalem. The Jews were in the minority in all three sections of Palestine, but in order to prepare for the creation of the Jewish state, the Zionist leadership began to harass Arabs in the Jewish sector to such an extent that by the date of independence in May 1948 more than 250,000 Palestinians had been driven from their homes and the Palestinian refugee problem was already in existence. Conflict between Zionists and Arabs erupted into the 1948-49 war, at the end of which the Palestinian refugee population had been vastly increased, while land originally zoned for Arab settlement passed into the hands of the Zionists, leaving them with 80 per cent of the territory of Palestine.

This was not the end of Israeli aggression. Following Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956, Israel joined with Britain and France in an ill-fated attempt to crush Egypt. In the 1967 war Israel seized East Jerusalem, the west bank of the Jordan, the Gaza strip, the Golan heights in Syria and the whole of Sinai up to the Suez Canal. Israel then occupied an area five times larger than was allocated to it by the UN. A further major clash occurred in 1973, at the conclusion of which the number of Palestinian refugees had risen to 2 million, while 1.3 million lived in the Arab Bantustan on the West Bank, and 700,000 Arabs lived as second-class citizens in Israel proper. Not surprisingly, in 1975 the UN General Assembly equated Zionism with apartheid because of its foul record in national and international affairs.

Under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the people of Palestine have been fighting for their right to exist as a national entity and to occupy their ancestral homes seized from them by the Zionists. In this respect they are in the same position as the oppressed and deprived people of South Africa and Namibia fighting for their national rights under the leadership of the African National Congress and SWAPO. We have always supported the Palestinian cause and recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the only genuine respresentative of the Palestinian people.

American Satellite

The essential point to grasp about Israel is that it is not a viable state but an outpost and instrument of imperialism. Economically it cannot support itself and only survives on aid received from the west, especially from the United States. A report published in the London *Times* on August 6, 1982, stated:

> "In the longer term, the heavy dependence of the Israeli forces on American supplies, and of the ailing Israeli economy on American economic aid, is clearly illustrated by the latest statistics. These show that if United States assistance were to be divided equally among the population, each Israeli would receive about $600 (£333) a year.

> "In the current fiscal year, American aid includes $785m in economic assistance in addition to $1,800m in military grants and loans. Before the invasion of Lebanon on June 6, there were 567 Israeli combat aircraft, 457 of them bought with United States finance.
>
> "With the exception of some French aircraft and British tanks, most of the equipment used by the Israeli armed forces has been obtained under the United States Government's foreign military sales programme. It has been calculated that Israel has received $1,500m of the $2,800m distributed throughout the world in United States aid since 1951.
>
> "A recent survey in the *Washington Post* showed that Israel now buys $500m worth of parts a year from 15,000 different American companies. The newspaper claimed that the intimate cooperation between the armed forces and arms industries in the two countries made the prospect of United States sanctions against Israel very unpopular with powerful elements in the American defence establishment and its weapons industry."

The report quoted Premier Begin boasting to an enthusiastic audience of Jewish-American fund-raisers that a secret weapon devised by the Israelis to knock out Soviet-made Syrian Sam 6 and Sam 8 missile batteries would be passed to "our American friends" and "will change the whole balance of strength between the Warsaw Pact and Nato forces".

Plan for World Domination

And this is what the whole Middle East war is all about. It is not a war to save Israel from annihilation, but a combined US-Israeli assault on the PLO, on the national liberation struggle of the Palestine people, on the independence of the Arab nations. Begin tries to justify his genocidal assault on the Lebanon by claiming he is only responding to attack from the PLO. But his destruction by aerial bombardment earlier this year of Iraq's nuclear reactor under construction near Baghdad was an unprovoked act of vandalism against a country which posed no threat to Israel, clearly demonstrating that Israel's actions are part of a concerted strategy to preserve and extend imperialist influence in the Middle East. At the same time as Israel is sowing death and destruction in Lebanon and other Arab states, the United States is building up its Rapid Deployment Force for operations in the Gulf Area, strengthening its bases in Egypt, Somalia, Diego Garcia and elsewhere. Israel's aggression is part of President Reagan's global strategy to encircle the Soviet Union and dominate the world.

No wonder the United States has vetoed every Security Council attempt to curb Israel's aggression, just as it has vetoed every attempt to force South Africa to quit Namibia and end its aggression against Angola or to end its apartheid policy in South Africa. The United States, which is preparing the ground for the launching of a first strike nuclear assault on the Soviet Union, is by no means abashed at the mini-holocaust which the Israelis have brought about in Beirut. Within two months of the start of their invasion of Lebanon on June 6, the Israelis had killed or wounded more than 50,000 people, 95 per cent of them civilians and 70 per cent women and children. Six hundred thousand people had been rendered homeless. Towns and villages throughout southern Lebanon had been indiscriminately attacked and devastated. The historic cities of Tyre, Sidon, Nabatiyeh and Beirut itself had been almost totally destroyed. The most barbarous means were being employed to achieve the Israeli objectives, including the use of US-made cluster, phosphorus and napalm bombs, the cutting off of electricity, water and food and medical supplies to the civilian population. This is just part of the price the imperialists expect humanity to pay to make the world safe for capitalism.

But humanity is not prepared to pay this price. Israel's aggression and terror tactics have caused revulsion in all parts of the world, rousing to a pitch feelings of hostility towards Israel and the United States. On the surface Israel may appear to have won a military victory against the PLO, but in the process it has near-bankrupted itself and created more problems than it can solve. It has certainly not ended the struggle of the Palestinian people for national self-determination and a homeland. Nor has it helped to secure Israel's future in the Middle East. On the contrary, it has exposed the Camp David Agreement as a device to divide the Arab world and consolidate imperialist domination of the region. If anything, the Arab peoples are today more anti-Israel and more anti-US than ever before. The aggressive policies of the Begin government have laid the ground for united Arab action against Israel in the future. A statement issued by the Communist and Workers' Parties of the Arab-East in Damascus at the end of May, warning of the danger of Israel's contemplated invasion of Lebanon, stressed

> "that a consistent anti-imperialist stand is indispensable for a victory of the cause of national liberation and social progress in the Arab countries."

Welcoming the serious steps repeatedly taken by the Soviet Union to eliminate the threat to the Arab peoples' independence and in support of their just cause, the Arab Parties' statement stressed:

> "A solid alliance with the USSR is of paramount importance in the present situation. Soviet-Arab friendship has always been and will continue to be an earnest of our peoples' struggle for national liberation and social emancipation. Any attempt to harm this friendship plays into the hands of Washington".

Nor have the Israeli people themselves been united in support of the aggressive action and policies of the Begin government. The Communist Party of Israel has for decades been conducting a struggle to make Israel not a Zionist state but a home for all its peoples, under the slogan: "Not with imperialism against the Arab peoples, but with the Arab peoples against imperialism". Since the start of the invasion of Lebanon a growing number of Israelis, including members of the armed forces, have come out openly demanding an end to the fighting, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all foreign territory and an end to the oppression of the Palestinians.

It is good to note that progressive forces in South Africa also have been roused on this issue to make a public stand in opposition to the traditional Botha-Begin alliance. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon was described as "racist and imperialist" at meetings organised in support of the Palestinians in many parts of the country, and "solidarity with Palestine" meetings were held on various university campuses, despite vicious attempts by gangs of Zionist thugs to disrupt them. Prominent public figures also signed protests against the Israeli aggression. The slogan "Zionism is Apartheid" has won widespread acceptance, and the recognition has grown that the struggle for national liberation in South Africa is part and parcel of the world-wide struggle against imperialism. This is another by-product of the war in the Middle East for which neither Begin nor Botha bargained. The dismantling of the South Africa-Israel axis must now be placed high on the agendas of the liberation movements of Southern Africa and the Arab world, of the Organisation of African Unity, of the international communist movement and progressive forces everywhere. An immediate priority task is to ensure that the racist Botha regime is not in any way encouraged by Begin's Lebanon adventure to extend its aggression against any of the frontline states.

The attention of the world, which has been focussed so sharply on the slaughter in Beirut, should be drawn especially to the plight of Angola, which has suffered devastation on a massive scale, in both human and material terms, ever since South Africa's initial invasion of 1975. Tens of thousands of Angolans and Namibians have been slaughtered indiscriminately in continuing South African attacks, and the Angolan economy has been gravely damaged. Towns and villages have been destroyed and the whole of Southern Angola is under effective South African occupation.

South Africa is engaged in a programme of destabilisation of all the frontline states, and further aggression against them is obviously under consideration by the racist regime. Bearing in mind the complexion of the forces ranged in Southern Africa today, any extension of the conflict — of which Botha in his present political desperation might well be capable — could easily turn out to be the flashpoint of a third world war. All humanity, for its own sake as well as that of the peoples of Southern Africa, must now unite in demanding that the Botha regime abandon forthwith its programme of aggression against neighbouring states and withdraw from all occupied lands, including Namibia, without delay.

THE HOARE OF MARITZBURG

The "Wild Geese" are coming home to roost and getting cooked. In Victoria last July four of Col. Mike Hoare's mercenaries were sentenced to death for their attempt in November 1981 to overthrow the government of President Rene in the Seychelles. South African National Intelligence Service agent Martin Dolinchek was given 20 years. In Maritzburg a few weeks later Col. Hoare himself was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for his part in hijacking a plane to take his defeated band of thugs to Durban. The remaining 41 mercenaries who were convicted with him were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from 6 months to 5 years.

In his defence Hoare claimed he had merely been doing his duty as he saw it to fight "communism" anywhere in the world and restore the Seychelles to the west. He was proud of what he had achieved. He claimed that the whole operation had been cleared by the South African Cabinet, the National Intelligence Service and the Defence Department, which had delivered arms and ammunition to his door. Some of his fellow accused said Hoare had told them at a briefing that the coup attempt also had the blessing of the US Central Intelligence Agency. One of the accused, Lt. de Beer, said in evidence Hoare had even claimed he had been negotiating with President Reagan and Secretary of State Haig. The Kenya Government was also to play a part. In Victoria Dolinchek confirmed that the Botha regime was well aware of the plan to overthrow President Rene. He had himself submitted full details to his superiors.

In his judgment the Acting Judge President of Natal, Mr Justice James, did not find that these claims were untrue, but said that since no attempt had been made by the defence to prove them, they amounted to no more than hearsay. He did find, however, that Dolinchek was in the employ of the NIS and added. "It would be naive to suggest they were not aware through Dolinchek of Col. Hoare's projected mercenary operation in general terms — even if they didn't take positive steps to support it".

Following the outcome of these trials, Premier Botha, already suspected of knowing more than he was prepared to admit at the time about the Information Department scandal which had unseated his predecessor Vorster and destroyed the career of Dr Connie Mulder and others, now once again found himself in the hot seat. In a statement he admitted that officials of the NIS and the Defence Department knew about Hoare's plan and that Defence Force personnel had supplied Hoare with weapons, ammunition and radios.

"However", he added, "I with to emphasise unequivocally that neither the SA Government, the Cabinet nor the State Security Council were aware of the coup. No authorisation was therefore given for any action. No money was used by officialdom for this purpose. . . The attempted coup was executed without the knowledge or approval of officials or departments concerned with the exception of those who took part directly".

Departmental action would be taken against those officials "who exceeded their authority" and legislation would be introduced to make the use and recruitment of South African citizens as mercenaries a punishable offence. "Suitable control measures have been instituted to prevent a similar situation occurring in future".

So senior Defence Department and National Security officials knew about the coup and took active steps to promote it, but the Government was in the dark — is that what Botha wants us to believe? Maybe he wants us to think that a brewery company planned and paid for it all, just as it has done as a sponsor for Government-backed sporting events. We are not alone in being sceptical. The "Star" reported on July 30:

"Opposition leaders today expressed amazement that South African defence and security officers could act without the knowledge of the Government".

And when the Minister of Defence threatened to sue the Conservative Party's defence spokesman for "insinuating" that the Minister had foreknowledge of Col. Hoare's planned coup, the "Rand Daily Mail" headed an editorial:

"Come off it, Mr Malan", and expressed "polite amazement" at the Government's professions of innocence. The Government's cover-up, said the "Mail", would not dispel the suspicion "that the mercenaries, however blameworthy, have been made the scapegoats for officialdom, and that certain officials may in turn be made scapegoats for shortcomings of the departmental heads".

We are satisfied by what happened, by the evidence in the two cases and by that given to the United Nations commission of inquiry that the Seychelles coup operation had been cleared at top level in both South Africa and the United States. Naturally enough, when the plot was foiled, the governments involved, as they always do when their agents are uncovered, pretend ignorance. But to suggest that government officials could function on this scale and at this level without authorisation from the top is to strain public credulity beyond all reasonable limits. And there is not even to be any sort of judicial or public inquiry, only "departmental action" which the laws of the land make it impossible for the press to pry into or ask too many questions about.

The Botha regime and its allies in this murderous operation must not be allowed to get away with it. The responsibility of Botha and Reagan for acts of terrorism in Southern Africa must be exposed to the world. These are the men who justify the murder of tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children in Angola, Lebanon, El Salvador and so many, many other countries on the grounds that they are "combatting international communism", "terrorism", "aggression" and what have you. In the case of the Seychelles everyone can now see that the Rene government was marked down for destruction by the imperialists because it had embarked on policies of reform which threatened the interests of international capitalism and imperialist domination of the Indian Ocean. Just as the legally elected government of Salvador Allende in Chile was "liquidated" because it was an obstacle to US domination of Latin America, so the CIA planned the cold-blooded murder of President Rene and members of his government lest their example spread to the mainland and undermine the dominance of imperialism and neo-colonialism on the African continent.

The Organisation of African Unity must take note of the Seychelles affair, and in particular the alleged involvement of the Kenya Government in support of the coup attempt must be investigated. Independent Africa is entitled to know who are the friends and enemies of the apartheid regime which is the main source of terrorism and destabilisation and the main threat to peace on the continent.

SOVIET UNION CELEBRATES ITS 60TH ANNIVERSARY

by Sithehi Khwelemthini

In December, 1982, the Soviet Union celebrates the 60th anniversary of its formation. What is the importance of this event for the whole world-wide revolutionary process? What is its significance for our struggle in Africa and South Africa in particular?

In this article we deal with the Soviet experience in solving the national question. What is paramount in our minds is the evaluation of this experience in the light of world-wide historical developments and the conclusions to be drawn from them; conclusions which are of a theoretical nature and are of practical political significance in the furtherance of our struggle for national liberation.

The Soviet people are the first to admit that these sixty years have not been easy. Nearly one third of this period was spent in wars forced upon them from outside, and on post-war reconstruction. In addition to this, the Soviet Union, being the first nation in the world to embark upon the road of socialism, had to pioneer the way, to experiment as it were, learning by its own mistakes. But the important thing is that what has been achieved is there to stay. This by no means implies that all the problems have been solved — new and sometimes unknown problems emerge calling for new solutions and initiatives. These problems are solved on the basis of the Leninist science of ethnic relations.

The October Revolution

Lenin lived in the epoch of imperialism. On the basis of a scientific analyis of the new epoch, he creatively and comprehensively developed the views of Marx and Engels on the national question. The demands of class struggle under the conditions of the First World War, the betrayal of socialism by the Social Democrats and the necessity for clarifying the position of the working class — these were some of the factors that led Lenin to make a thorough study of imperialism.

The development of the Leninist theory of the national and colonial question was closely linked with the struggle of the Bolsheviks whose crowning success was the Great Socialist October Revolution of 1917. Lenin saw the best way of resolving this question as the class struggle of the proletariat for political power and for a new exploitation-free society. The Great Socialist October Revolution smashed the fetters of social and national oppression; roused all the people of Czarist Russia to independent creativity; established the power of the working class, of public ownership of the means of production and laid a reliable foundation for the free development of all nations and nationalities, for their close unity and friendship. The victory of the October Revolution meant the seizure of power by a class which had no interests in the enslavement of other people and this explains why the Soviet state, as the first anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist state in the world, denounced the annexation of other peoples.

The abolition of national oppression ensured the development of potentials and revolutionary traditions of formerly enslaved and despised people and the national question was solved on the basis of fraternal solidarity of workers and peasants who have been liberated from the chains of capitalism.

The Birth of the USSR

The birth of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics — itself a result of the victory of the October Revolution — took place on December 30, 1922. It was set up by a mandate of the people.

The Soviets (Councils), as new organs of state power, were born of the revolution and elected by the working people, and as such they continue to be the political foundation of the country to this day.

On December 30, 1922, the first congress of the Soviets of the whole country opened in Moscow. The congress adopted two important documents: the Declaration and the Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Treaty was concluded by the Russian Federation, the Ukrainian Republic, the Byelorussian Republic and the Transcaucasian Federation of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The document contained a special clause which reserved for each republic the right to secede from the Union.

1922 was only the beginning. Later, Soviet socialist republics were formed in Uzbekistan (1924), Turkmenia (1924) and Tajikistan (1929). In 1936 the autonomous republics of Kazakhstan and Kirghizia were proclaimed sovereign republics. In 1940, after the outbreak of World War 2, four more republics acceded to the USSR: Moldavia, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

Today the Soviet Union is made up of 15 sovereign republics, 20 autonomous republics, 8 autonomous regions and 10 autonomous areas. All the big and small nationalities of the Union are represented in the Soviets of People's Deputies. The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Supreme Soviets of sovereign republics, of autonomous republics and local soviets are made up of delegates of over 100 nations and nationalities. In other words, a total of 2.3 million people's elected representatives, communists and non-party people, representing more than 100 nations and nationalities, make decisions in the Soviets from the point of view of nation-wide interests on important issues of political socio-economic and cultural development and *are going through a true school of socialist internationalism.*

The USSR, which stretches from the Baltic Sea and the Carpathians to the Pacific Ocean, from the far-off northern islands to the sunny oases of Central Asia and Transcaucasia, is a union of sovereign socialist republics, each of which has its own constitution, a Supreme Soviet as the highest body of state power, its own government, its own national emblem and its own flag. Each republic has its own national identity, its ethnic characteristics that are typical of this or that particular nationality.

This year the population of the USSR is expected to be above 270 million. The Soviet Union is the world's first single multinational state of workers and peasants. History knows no state which, over such a short period of time, has done so much for the all-round development of nations and nationalities as the USSR.

Knowledge of how the Soviet Union solves the national question is important for African countries which are implementing diverse forms of solution to this question, ranging from Mozambique, which is implementing a one nation theory, to Nigeria where the emergence of many nations within one country is possible.

Tasks of the Soviets

A glance at the newspaper *Izvestia,* published by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, will give you a picture of the tasks of the Soviets. On the front page the words: "Workers of all lands, unite!" are written in 15 languages, in different types of letters: Slavonic or cyrillic, the Latin alphabet, the elaborate script of the Armenian and Georgian languages and the new alphabets of the Soviet East. The message is clear. It underlines the common class interests of the peoples of the Soviet Union. It is also a rejection of the myth of eternal antagonism of people of different nationalities, an antagonism which allegedly stems from racial, psychological and other factors.

The national question has a specific social significance at every historical period and national liberation serves as a necessary link in the social emancipation of all working people. Subsequently the voluntary alliance of the emancipated peoples provides the necessary conditions for strengthening the new socio-economic system. National and class tasks cannot be counterposed. They are indivisible.

To understand and master this problem one has to accept the unconditional recognition of the right of each nation to decide its own future — the right of nations to self-determination — and this should be accompanied by the acceptance of equality of all races and nationalities and the fight against any manifestations of narrow nationalism or chauvinism. Lenin taught the communists to cultivate high standards of contacts between nations, to show a delicate and solicitous approach to national feelings, especially those of small nationalities. He attached particular importance to the strict observance of national fairness and equality and demanded that this equality should not be violated even out of negligence, even in the form of a joke.

The Soviet state did not waste time before implementing these Leninist principles. In 1917 Finland, which was part of the Russian Empire, became an independent state after the October Revolution. This was implementing the principle of the right of nations to self-determination, including secession and the formation of an independent state.

The question of secession has bedevilled African politics and has led to unhappy and unhealthy developments and repercussions souring national feeling and aggravating inter-ethnic relations. Secession in Africa is more often than not confused with the principle of self-determination. Ismagilova, a Soviet Africanist, has some interesting things to say on this question:

> "...the slogan of self-determination is often put into circulation by neocolonialist circles in order to reinforce their positions, and by nationalistic leaders in inner party struggles, especially during elections to legislative bodies...The principle poses problems not only of the formal (legal) equality of peoples but also of achieving real equality in the level of socio-economic and cultural development. The right to self-determination and to independent decision of its fate belongs to any people irrespective of its size or level of ethnic and socio-economic development.
>
> "One must not, however, confuse the right of self-determination in principle, including secession and the formation of independent states, and the practical desirability of secession or even granting of autonomy in any concrete case. Secession does not always by any means correspond to the real interests of one people or another. The breaking up of Africa into a host of small, economically weak states is already proving a real brake on its social and economic development. Realisation of the principle of self-determination on an ethnic basis in forms intensifying break-up could only aggravate existing difficulties in present circumstances and lead to further 'balkanisation' of the continent...
>
> "The character of self-determination of African states, which has come out in the same way as in the history of West European states, has had a great effect on the national question. In Africa it is not nations that have been self-determined, since such have to be formed, but people of colonial administrative units formed historically in the period of colonial rule and united by the liberation struggle. This has led to interethnic antagonisms, which were relegated to the background by the national liberation struggle, sometimes becoming more acute after independence. But revision of the political map of Africa is not a realistic solution...But the experience of history is that it is not necessary, in order to combat separatism, to reject the principle of self-determination; on the contrary, it is necessary to observe it consistently."

How did Lenin envisage the question of equality of all races and nationalities? It had to be genuine equality and not just fine declarations and slogans. Let us look at this more concretely. The formation of the USSR enabled all nationalities comprising it to join efforts in eliminating the effects of centuries-old national oppression, especially the economic and cultural backwardness in the outlying regions. Under Czarist rule these regions were virtually colonies. The proclamation of the rights and freedom of these people had to be accompanied by the creation of conditions which would enable them to make effective use of these rights and freedoms.

The burning issue was to help the working people of these areas, e.g. Central Asia, to catch up with the more advanced Central Russia. The Central Asian people were at a very low level of social development at that time, at a patriarchal or feudal stage. Since it would have been almost impossible for these republics of the Soviet East to have made such rapid progress by their own unaided efforts, it became necessary for massive financial, material, technical, scientific and cultural assistance to be extended to them, with the result that today they have come close to the level of the more advanced areas of the USSR.

The decisive role was played by the Russian Federation, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) which, despite difficulties and privations, helped other peoples of the Soviet Union to overcome backwardness. Itself the first multi-national Soviet state and therefore prototype of the USSR, it became a rallying point around which all Soviet republics voluntarily linked. The RSFSR is the largest as regards territory, size of population and economic potential. It has a predominantly Russian population, but also includes 16 autonomous republics which take up about one quarter of its entire area, and five autonomous regions and several autonomous areas.

There is a lesson to learn here, namely the socialist development means that, as the more advanced regions move ahead, they help the less developed regions and people to advance more rapidly.

Achievements

By its very existence, by the real practice of the new type of social relations and relations between nationalities, by the force of example in resolving the most complicated problems which capitalism is unable to cope with, the Soviet state united working people irrespective of their national origin. Out of the community of class interests and aims there have emerged and developed relations between peoples, relations which have no equal in history — the Leninist friendship of peoples. We should remember that there is hardly any country in the world with such a wide variety of natural and ethnic contrasts. The Soviet Union is a multi-national country with a variety of traditions and customs which have taken shape as the result of the different historical conditions under which they have evolved.

The Soviet people are one people. But this does not mean that the people of the Soviet Union form a new nationality. It does mean that they form a *new community of people* of different nationalities, classes and social groups bound by economic, political and ideological ties. These nationalities, big or small, do not lose their identity within this community of Soviet people. On the contrary, they now have better possibilities than at any previous time to develop their cultural heritage. The various nationalities that make up Soviet socialist society are developing as independent entities and at the same time they converge.

Is this not a contradiction? At first glance these processes seem mutually exclusive. When we say the different nationalities are developing we mean that they are strengthening their specific national features. But how in that case can they converge?

We regard national development in a much broader sense than a mere furtherance of certain specific national characteristics. The all-round development of a given nationality also implies the absorption and development of the experience and achievements of other people with whom these nationalities come into contact. Common "international" features become more pronounced in the varied national forms of Soviet socialist culture and in this process the national culture of each nationality becomes increasingly enriched by the achievements of other fraternal nations.

The Soviet achievements affect every aspect of social life. Let us take education. Writing about Kirghizia in 1906, the Russian magazine *Vestnik Vospitania* (Educational News) stated that, at the rate of progress obtaining in Central Asia in those days, it would take at least 4,600 years to eradicate illiteracy in that part of Czarist Russia. But the Soviet government resolved this problem in a matter of a few decades by mounting a special campaign and allocating large sums of money from the national budget of the USSR. In pre-revolutionary Russia three quarters of the population could neither read nor write — in Central Asia literacy in the age group of 9 to 49 years stood at 2 to 8 per cent — but today illiteracy is a thing of the past. More than 40 nationalities of Central Asia, Kazakhstan, the Arctic North and Soviet Far East, which had no written languages of their own, have acquired a scientifically developed written and literary language in the years of Soviet rule. The last population census taken in 1979 revealed that Moldavia, Turkmenia, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia, all of which did not have a single higher education institution before the revolution, now each have from 120 to 200 university or institute students per ten thousand of the population. This is proportionately higher than in the leading countries of the West such as France with 96, Britain with 83, Italy with 70 and West Germany with 48. Every fourth employee in the country today is connected with mainly mental work — the number of people engaged in intellectual labour between the last two censuses of 1970 and 1979 grew by 29 per cent for the country as a whole. It must be again emphasised that these achievements in science, technology and culture are a result of the efforts of the multi-ethnic Soviet intelligentsia.

In the field of the economy the achievements are not less impressive. Here the CPSU ensures a combination of centralised planning and the broad initiatives of Union and Autonomous Republics, Regions and Areas and seeks a balanced development of the country's economy. Whereas the share of the Soviet Union in the world's industrial output was one per cent in 1922, today it is 20 per cent.

The data of the USSR Central Statistical Board gives us the following figures:

Soviet National Income Growth (Taking 1922 as 1)
1922 — 1
1940 — 11
1970 — 99
1981 — 167

Industrial Growth (Taking 1922 as 1)
1922 — 1
1940 — 24
1970 — 279
1981 — 514
1982 target — 537

Real per capita income growth (Taking 1922 as 1)
1940 — 1
1970 — 4
1981 — 6

In the USSR production assets double every ten years, whilst it takes the USA about 20 years, Britain 19 and West Germany 16 years to achieve the same increase. In 1981 as much national income was generated in 2.2 days as in the entire 1922. In 1970-80 industrial production in the USSR almost doubled. To do that Britain needed 26 years, West Germany and France

18 years and the USA 17 years. According to plan, Soviet industrial output in 1982 will have increased 537-fold compared with 1922.

What about agriculture? Towards the end of 1981, there were 25,900 collective and 21,600 state farms in the USSR. Each of them is a large agricultural enterprise with modern machinery. There is an average of 41 tractors per collective farm compared with one tractor per three collective farms in 1928. The number of tractors per state farm has reached 57 as against 5 in 1928. Agriculture has up to date material and technical facilities in all republics. The mechanisation of production has altered the nature of labour in the countryside which has become more industralised. One farmer out of five is a machine operator and there is growing inter-farm cooperation and agro-industrial integration.

These achievements have turned the Soviet Union into one of the most economically advanced countries in the world within an historically short period of time. It has its problems but its achievements are immense.

Some Social and Ethnic Changes

The invasion of the Soviet Union by Nazi Germany in 1941 led to a redistribution of industry. Thousands of factories were moved from the Ukraine and from Russia to the republics of Central Asia. This was followed by migration of workers of different nationalities from one republic to another, a movement which affected the national composition of these repubics. Today in Turkmenia, Tajikistan and Latvia the non-indigenous population comprises 40 per cent of the total population, while in Kirghizia, in the Tatar Autonomous Republic and the Karbadino-Balkar Autonomous Republic the figure is more than 50 per cent.

The post-war reconstruction and the development of vast tracts of virgin lands attracted a massive influx of workers from other republics and thousands of enthusiasts went to these new areas, with the result that, for example, the indigenous population of Kazakhstan now constitutes no more than one third of the total population of the republic. At present 21 million Russians live outside the Russian Federation: in the Ukraine, Central Asia and in the Baltic republics. At the same time millions of Ukrainians, Armenians, Georgians etc. — about 100 nationalities in all — live in the Russian Federation. This story can be repeated in other spheres of social life e.g. education establishments.

The fact that so many of the Soviet republics have a mixed population raises problems that would be impossible to solve if the big and small nationalities of the country did not live in friendship and comradeship.

How are these problems solved? Let us take Kirghizia as an example. In the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic 56.2 per cent of the population is non-Kirghiz. On the other hand, Kirghizia must remain Kirghizia with its own national identity, with its own voice in the affairs of the country. The non-Kirghizians who were born on its soil and for whom Kirghizia has become a homeland regard it as their home.

The nationality of the party and the government leaders in Kirghizia is another important consideration. The leadership of the republics is multi-national and the language used is Russian — the Russian language has been voluntarily adopted by Soviet people as the language of inter-ethnic communication and 82 per cent of the country's population has a command of it. At the same time Soviet law guarantees and safeguards the rights of every nationality, however small, and a Soviet citizen of any nationality can learn to read and write in his mother tongue. It is important for Party committees to show a clear understanding of these problems and to propose the best ways to resolve them, especially in regard to specific requirements (language, culture and mode of living).

The development of industry, agriculture, science and the flourishing of culture are accompanied by the development of the different Soviet Republics' images of their own identity, their own national features. The establishment of relations of friendship, trust and mutual assistance among nations laid a basis for tackling the task of labour with the achievements of culture and of placing all sources of knowledge at the disposal of everybody, irrespective of social status and nationality. The development of talents and abilities, the flourishing of all nations and nationalities and the creative activity of the masses in the field of science and art — this is real socialism!

Soviet culture, which is socialist in content, diversified in its national forms and internationalist in spirit, consolidates the ideological and moral cohesion of nations and nationalities. The multi-national Soviet literature is published in dozens of languages of the people of the USSR, many of whom did not have a written language of their own before the October Revolution.

All these achievements were gained in the course of bitter struggle: the unity of the Soviet people was steeled and grew in the course of industrialisation, the collectivisation of agriculture and cultural revolution — in the work of building socialism. In the Great Patriotic War against German Nazism these fraternal peoples stood shoulder to shoulder in defending their motherland; they showed mass heroism and an indomitable will for victory against the German invaders. The Russian working class marched along the same path with peoples of former ethnic outlying regions. People who were colonised by Russia, people who were once doomed to age-old backwardness, made a confident stride into the future, bypassing capitalism and helping to defeat the German invaders.

Internationalism

If in this article we have not dealt with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union it is because we believe that the foreign policy of any country reflects its internal policy. The Soviet Union teaches the citizens that one's internationalist duty today means, among other things, working honestly, resourcefully and creatively for the common good, raising the efficiency and quality of work in every way, and playing one's full part in resolving the problems of national importance by building up the economic and defence strength of the USSR and of the entire world socialist community. Leonid Brezhnev was driving this point home when he said at the November 1981 Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee:

> "It is necessary to work better. It is necessary to draw up plans better and carry them out better. It is necessary to organise better production and to produce better. In short, to work more efficiently."

The 26th Congress of the CPSU in 1981 envisaged a build-up of the material and cultural potential of each republic and at the same time its maximum utilisation for an harmonious development of the entire country. The observance of the scientific principles of leadership, of the Leninist style of work and of Leninist manpower policy guarantees a correct approach to and translation into reality of the Leninist science of ethnic relations under the conditions of mature socialism: that is, drawing together all classes and social groups of Soviet society leading to the establishment of a classless structure of society. The Eleventh Five Year Plan lays the foundations of communism — an important stage in the implementation of the Leninist nationalities policy and in the consolidation of the friendship of the peoples of the USSR.

The Peace Programme of the Eighties, advanced by the 26th Congress and supplemented by Leonid Brezhnev's new initiatives, shows realistic, constructive ways of reducing the risk of war, promoting detente and developing broad cooperation between states with different social systems. It is an alternative to the policy of imperialism and the arms race, escalated by imperialism and threatening the peoples with nuclear catastrophe.

The aggravation of national differences in the capitalist world and the onslaught of nationalism, chauvinism and racism, the discrimination and fierce exploitation of ethnic minorities and foreign workers exposes not only the lies about human rights propagated by the ruling class of these countries — it unmasks the hypocrisy and demonstates that capitalism cannot resolve the national question it itself has engendered.

What about the internationalism of the Soviet Union? It manifests itself in many ways, whether it be the assistance given to young developing countries such as Kampuchea, or to freedom fighters in Palestine, El Salvador or Southern Africa, or its fight against anti-semitism or Zionism. It is there for everyone to see.

The new social system in the Soviet Union engenders new international relations, free from discrimination, domination and subordination characteristic of the capitalist world. The fraternal countries of socialism give an example of such relations — a new, socialist type of international relations between sovereign states united by the community of fundamental interests and aims, the Marxist ideology, and sealed by bonds of comradely solidarity, mutual assistance and all-round cooperation.

In these sixty years existence of the Soviet Union, we have seen that the broader the development of socialist democracy and the more democratic the life of the country becomes, the stronger the force of the voluntary mutual gravitation of the working people of all nations and ethnic minorities. It is not enough to proclaim the equality of nations — it must be protected. The adoption of the new constitution of the USSR (a product of the entire Soviet people) further consolidates the federal principles of the Soviet multi-ethnic state and organically blends socialist federation with democratic centralism. This ensures a consistent struggle against both narrow-mindedness and contempt for specific interests of nations and ethnic minorities.

The creation of the USSR is a vivid embodiment of Lenin's ideas — the ideas he evolved were translated into reality — and teaches us that there is no road to socialism other than the common path discovered by Marxism-Leninism and confirmed by the experience of the USSR, of the countries of real socialism, by the international practice of revolutionary struggle and socialist construction. At the same time there can be no successful advancement along this road without taking account of the national peculiarities of each country. There are no stereotypes, no "models" of political system, which ignore the specifics of each individual country. But of interest to us are the historic achievements of this friendly family of equal republics and nations jointly building communism and ensuring the cohesion of the Soviet people around the CPSU.

The 60th anniversary of the creation of the Soviet Union is an occasion on which we South Africans, people belonging to diverse ethnic origins, should ponder and study the convincing evidence of the great revolutionary power of Marxism-Leninism and of the ideas of proletarian internationalism and the great creative contribution which the CPSU is making towards the theory and practice of scientific communism. This theory and practice shows extensively the role of the heroic working class and of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the internationalist consolidation of the entire working people, in the implementation of the Leninist ethnic relations policy and in promoting the all-round progress and convergence of the nations and nationalities and in the building of socialism and communism.

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RACISTS CHANGE COURSE ON THE TRADE UNION FRONT

By R. S. Nyameko

The nature of labour legislation must be judged on two points: first the contents of the law, and secondly the class structure of the society in which it operates.

South Africa is a capitalist society with a social formation distinguished by private ownership of the means of production, but also race discrimination against the majority of the people.

The first piece of industrial relations legislation passed in South Africa was the Transvaal Industrial Disputes Prevention Act of 1909 (introduced after the 1907 strikes of miners on the Witwatersrand). Most of the operative clauses dealt with the establishment of Conciliation Boards and the prohibition of strikes. This Act did not recognise any special negotiating role for trade unions. Unions were entitled to apply for the establishment of a Conciliation Board, but then so was any other group of ten or more 'employees'. The definition of 'employee' was: '*any white person* engaged by an employer to perform a work'! Thus not only African, but also Indian and Coloured workers were excluded. This Act did not succeed in containing the struggles of the White workers, though it prevented a few strikes.

By 1919 there had come into existence through the class struggle a wide range of apparatuses and institutions functioning on a racially discriminatory basis to regulate the struggles of White wage earning employees. Their struggles led to the 1922 Rand Revolt.

"Peace in Industry" was the slogan under which the Smuts government launched the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924. Its proclaimed purpose was to substitute negotiations, conciliation and settlement for strikes. Consequently the Act contained elaborate procedures aimed at preventing strikes, aborting those which did occur, punishing workers and their leaders for disregarding the procedures.

The definition of "employee" included White, Coloured and Indian workers but excluded African workers.

After the Nationalist Government's introduction of detention without trial and the torturing to death of trade union veterans like Elijah Loza, Lawrence Ndzanga and others, there was a growing realisation on the part of the African workers of the need for organisation.

Despite the Government's declared policy of 'bleeding the African trade unions to death', African trade unions have continued to flourish, and because of the web of repressive laws to which African trade unions were subjected, also to vocalise their political aspirations.

The growing strength of independent African trade unions did not go unnoticed by the Government, employers and White controlled trade unions who saw it as an unacceptable challenge to the status quo. They reasoned that since these unions by their very existence symbolised the futility of the Government's attempts to destroy them, they had to be reined-in and controlled. But that would require official acknowledgement of their existence.

The Labour Relations Act 57 of 1981 amends the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956[1], which in turn took the place of the I.C. Acts of 1924 and 1937.

In addition to these amendments, the Act of 1981 repeals the Black Labour Relations Act of 1953 (as amended in 1973 and 1977); the Black Labour (settlement of disputes) Amendment Act of 1955, and the Electrical Wiremen and Contractors' Act 1939 (as amended in 1955, 1957 and 1962).

All these statutes were notoriously racist and discriminatory against African workers. By repealing them, the new statute eliminates the legal discriminations that have afflicted the labour movement for more than half a century.

Pressure for Change

All sections of the progressive trade union movement, the liberation movement and anti-apartheid groups have agitated for the removal of colour bars from the labour laws. Our struggle for an open labour market and a free trade union structure *began as far back as 1924*.

The changes in the labour laws can be attributed to a number of factors, such as:

(a) the growing strength of the mass movement for the national democratic revolution;
(b) the upsurge of the African working class demonstrated in the round of strikes that took place from 1973 onward;
(c) the parallel rise in the number of African unions and organised workers which increased threefold between 1979-1981;
(d) pressure from the international trade union movement, the United Nations and its agencies, like the ILO, European Economic Community and churches for the dismantling of overt colour bars in industry and trade unions;
(e) demands from employers' organisations for labour stability, an increase in the supply of skilled workers and trained operatives, and greater freedom to hire and fire workers without statutory constraints;
(f) the strengthening of ties between Afrikaner capital and monopoly capital at home and abroad.

The changes in the labour laws pose urgent problems of evaluation, policy, strategy, organisation, class alignment and inter-racial relations. Some examples follow:

(a) Groups of white trade union leaders recognise that the racial barriers are becoming obsolete in the expanding economy. One reason for this approach is the decline in the proportion of white workers employed in industry. They therefore promote non-racial unions as a means to protect their interests;
(b) Reactionary white workers, centred mainly in the mining and steel industries, have said they will fight these changes to the bitter end;
(c) The split in the ruling Nationalist Party is due in large part to the controversy over the Wiehahn and Riekert Reports which outlined the changes in labour laws;
(d) African trade unionists are divided over such key issues as the registration of unions, participation in the industrial councils[2] and integration with the White and Coloured unions[3].

Race Discrimination

The Labour Relations Amendment Act of 1981 deletes all reference to race, usually by a simple removal of racial terms and in some instances by substituting non-racial words.

Definitions of *Black, Black area, Coloured area, Coloured person* and *White person* are deleted from Section I of the Principal Act, so these racial categories are removed. The labour laws have been purged of references to race and colour.

Under the old law the exclusion of Africans from the definition of 'employee'[4] was used to bar them from taking part in statutory collective bargaining procedures and from building strong labour organisations. A direct consequence was the division of the working class into separate, unequal and antagonistic racial camps. Our Party strenuously fought this, as did radical trade unionists, objecting both to the discrimination and the entire ritual of collective bargaining. The law "tamed" the unions, cultivated a spirit of "reformism", and divided workers into separate, unequal and antagonistic racial camps.

Progressive forces, while questioning the merit of statutory collective bargaining, centred their attacks on the racial clauses in the old Act. These racial clauses also came under criticism, as stated earlier, from the international trade union movement and the ILO which endorsed collective bargaining in general terms.

The publication of the Wiehahn Commission's report on labour law added another dimension to the debate. The Commission complained that African unions, being unregistered, escaped the constraints of the Industrial Conciliation Act and flourished under conditions of semi-illegality. Wiehahn therefore recommended the extension of the I.C. Act to include Africans.

After much controversy and attempts to discriminate against migratory workers, Bantustan residents and "foreigners" from neighbouring states, the government decided to abolish distinctions between categories of workers. For the first time in South Africa, 'employee' is defined solely in terms of the employment relationship as "any person who is employed by or working for any employer and receiving or entitled to receive any remuneration."[5]

This simple definition opens the statutory bargaining system to all workers regardless of race. Coupled with repeal of the Black Labour Regulations Act, the Act of 1981 narrows the status gap between Africans and other workers.

Contract workers, migrants and commuters have the same status as urban workers under the Act. This reflects the real unity of interests between the urban working class and workers from the Bantustans. Both groups reject any attempts to divide them. They belong to the same unions, go on strike together and live up to the principle of *unity in action*. It was this solidarity that forced the regime to abandon their attempts to divide the workers according to their places of residence and so-called political status.

As in earlier laws, the Act excludes three categories of workers from the system of collective bargaining: those employed in farming, domestic workers and workers employed by the state.

African unions are not legally obliged to register. Those which refuse to register are denied stop-order facilities and a seat on the industrial council. The point to note is that African workers have a choice between different procedures.

By adopting a race-free definition of "employee", the racists have opened the door both to the formation of registered African unions and the registration of open or non-racial unions. Prior to this amendment, Africans were not "employees", and therefore could not form or belong to a registered union which by definition consisted only of "employees"[6].

The possibility of registering African unions has become a subject of debate in progressive circles. Some radicals in the labour movement object to registration on the grounds that it exposes unions to bureaucratic controls and restricts their internal democracy.

The statutory differences between registered and unregistered unions are minimal. In keeping with the recommendations of the Wiehahn Commission, the government has decided to bring all unions under the supervision of the bureaucracy.

Controls over the Unions

The controls take the form of provisions that allow the Department of Manpower (formerly Labour) to oversee unions, monitor their affairs, supervise their financial transactions and generally restrict the scope of their autonomy.

These powers and authorities were previously exercised only by registered unions. Unregistered ones consisting usually of Africans fell outside the scope of the controls. The general trend of the amended Act is to subject all unions, whether registered or not, to the same kind of surveillance.

To demonstrate the similarity, the provisions relating to registered and unregistered unions are examined below:

(a) A union that *applies* for registration must submit copies of its constitution, signed by the chairman and secretary, together with other information required by the registrator[7].

Any trade union which *does not apply* for registration within three months must at the end of this period submit a copy of its constitution, its head office address and the names of its office-bearers and officials[8].

(b) Every *registered* trade union shall:

- i maintain a register of members;
- ii keep proper books of accounts;
- iii prepare annual statements of income and expenditure and a balance sheet;
- iv cause its books of accounts to be audited at least once a year;
- v submit these statements to an annual meeting of members[9].

These provisions of Section 8 also apply to any trade union which is *not registered*[10] and also to any federation of trade unions *whether or not it is registered*[11].

Failure to comply is an offence for which the prescribed penalty is a fine of R1000 or a year's imprisonment or both. A union that refuses to seek registration cannot evade the controls without running the risk of being fined and imprisoned for refusing to submit constitutions and other documents required.

Another consequence of including Africans in the definition of employee is that their unions, *whether registered or unregistered,* are liable to be investigated by labour inspectors[12].

Inspectors have wide powers of investigation, may require officials and other persons to furnish information relating to the union's activities, examine books and documents, and generally pry into the union's affairs.

Refusal to register therefore does not confer immunity against the exercise of the inspectors' powers or enable a union to evade the provisions that require it to furnish prescribed documents and information.

Section 11 (1) as amended requires trade union officials to retain for a period of three years membership registers, financial statements, minutes and other specified documents; submit annual statements showing the number of members, the number who are not in good standing and other prescribed information. *The section applies to both registered and unregistered unions.*

The *head office* of any trade union, registered or unregistered, must be situated in the Republic, 'exclusive of any territory which is a self-governing territory within the Republic'[13]. No trade union may therefore have its head office in KwaZulu or Gazankulu which are 'self-governing' within the RSA or in Transkei and Bophutatswana which are 'outside' the Republic.

The restrictions violate a union's right to decide on its own account where to establish its headquarters.

Mixed unions allowed

The principal 1956 Act introduced a vicious system of racial segregation in trade unions and the labour market. The Act prohibited the registration of 'mixed unions', open to both White and Coloured employees, without the Minister's approval. He could authorise 'mixed' unions to retain a non-racial membership on condition that they had an all-white executive, racially segregated branches and racially separate meetings.

Section 4(6) of the principal Act which imposed race segregation on unions has been repealed in its entirety.

There are now no legal barriers to the formation of open unions consisting of workers of all colour groups, meeting together in non-racial branches and electing non-racial executives. It is possible to conceive of an alliance between African, Coloured, Indian and White workers on the basis of their common interests against the employers and the state.

The concession has important implications, both in terms of the historical background and for current policies. The question arises whether workers should support non-racial unions. For instance, in the garment industry the African unions have refused to surrender their autonomy under a non-racial executive. On the other hand many multi-racial unions have been formed with a large African membership. This new factor is largely responsible for the considerable increase in the membership of TUCSA and its affiliated membership. This provision will undoubtedly encourage reformism and the spread of non-political attitudes among the African trade unions which are drawn into the TUCSA network.

Section 6 has been totally repealed. This Section provided for the division of the assets of a union which previously, being non-racial, was forced to divide itself into two unions — one for Whites and one for Coloured workers. All this is now history. But we do well to remind ourselves of the dislocation, material loss and mental suffering inflicted on workers who had belonged to an integrated union, in some instances for more than half a century. Unions can now come together in non-racial branches, hold meetings together and elect an executive of their own choice, regardless of colour.

For the first time in our history, an African can legally sit on the executive committee of his union together with a Coloured, Indian or White worker and mix on equal terms with fellow workers of another colour group. It is now possible to build non-racial unions with an integrated membership of workers of all colour groups.

However, the absence of discrimination in the labour law does not — as the experience in countries like the US, Britain, Zimbabwe and elsewhere demonstrates — automatically ensure equality of rights and opportunities for all workers. The pass laws remain. Discriminatory practices on the part of the employers and the discrimination embedded in the social structure and entrenched by the attitudes and prejudices built up amongst the various racial groups over the centuries still remain to be eliminated. Basically we can state that this will not happen until the system of private ownership of the means of production has been abolished and all forms of exploitation ended. But to make the best possible use of present opportunities, it is necessary for the oppressed workers to assert themselves, reject any manifestations of white supremacy and tackle the problem of coming to terms with fellow workers of different colour and cultural groups. The revolutionary force of "unity in action" must be demonstrated on the labour front as well as on all other fronts of the struggle for national liberation.

Ban on politics

Section 8(6) of the principal Act of 1956 prohibited unions from affiliating with any political party, defined as any association or group of persons which has as its object the nomination of candidates for election to parliament or to any provincial council or local authority. Section 6 of Act 94 of 1979 substituted the words 'any legislative body established by any law for parliament, or any provincial council or local authority', thereby extending the area of prohibited activity to include parties and elections in the Bantustans.

Under the amending Act of 1981, a union is prohibited from providing financial aid or 'other assistance' and from influencing its members to assist a political party or candidate for election to a legislative body or office or other position in a political party.[14] These restrictions constitute an abominable interference in the affairs and activities of workers' associations.

The racist regime has always been afraid of radical movements, whether socialist or national liberation, amongst workers. The ban imposed on political activities reveals clearly the government's awareness that Black working class politics is aimed against racism and colour bar discrimination — everything that falls under the label of apartheid. This part of the Act also serves incidentally to restrict organised opposition to the government on the part of White workers, whether socialist, progressive or verkrampte. Afrikaner totalitarianism tolerates no competition and no opposition from any section of the working class movement.

Since there is no democracy in South Africa some people may regard this constraint as being unimportant. This is not so. The exclusion of organised workers from political activity seriously retards the growth of political consciousness through political action by the working class. All unions are affected — registered and unregistered. They therefore have a common interest to agitate for the removal of the political clause.

Industrial Councils

The new labour laws have re-opened an old issue which goes back to the time of the first introduction of the IC Act in 1924. At that time and for many years afterwards radicals in the SA Trade Union Congress argued that Industrial Councils were a means of taming the trade unions by substituting conciliation for militant action. Indeed this was the intention of the IC Act.

The radicals, who included leading communists, agreed that workers would do better for themselves by negotiating directly with the bosses. They should rely on their own strength and not on procedures laid down by the Act.

Nevertheless, Industrial Councils came into being on an increasing scale until all White trade unions and some with mixed White, Coloured and Indian members sat on Industrial Councils with employers. White, Coloured and Indian workers benefited, or thought they benefited from the Industrial Council system. In fact, they were able to negotiate high wages and better conditions of work at the expense of the African worker who was excluded from the statutory system of collective bargaining.

For nearly 60 years we agitated against this exclusion, demanded the right of Africans to form unions and to take part in collective bargaining procedures. Little support was received for this campaign from all but a few registered unions. This hostility, or at least passivity, bred in militant trade unionists a deep-seated suspicion of Industrial Councils and of trade union registration.

African unions affiliated to TUCSA have joined Industrial Councils. Many African unions, however, reject the Council system. The unions represented at the trade union summit meeting in Langa, 8-9 August 1981, resolved to:

a. Reject the present Industrial Council system as a means of collective bargaining.

b. Recommend that unions that are not members of Industrial Councils should not enter any Industrial Council.

c. Request participating unions to refer this back to their respective unions for endorsement.

d. Support each other in the event of any union refusing participation on the Industrial Council.[15].

Provisions relating to the formation of Industrial Councils, their registration and corporate status have not been amended.[16].

The inclusion of Africans in the definition of employee in the 1981 Act has resulted in a material change in the Council system. Africans can now form and belong to registered unions which are eligible for membership of a Council. Only registered unions may be admitted. However, no union may be admitted unless all the parties to the Council give their consent in writing.[17] The Council decision must be communicated to the applicant union which has a right to appeal to the Industrial Court against the decision.

The unanimity rule is new. It enables any member of a Council, who may be an employer or trade unionist, to block the admission of an applicant union. The barrier may have been raised to keep out the African unions. We oppose all forms of race discrimination. Parity bargaining power cannot be achieved between propertyless wage workers and owners of the means of production. Employers always confront employees from a position of strength whether they negotiate round a Council table or at the Conciliation Board or in the boss's office in the factory.

The inequality is even more pronounced when wages are determined by an authority on which workers are not represented. Africans were always in this position when they were excluded from the definition of employee and therefore from participating in the work of Industrial Councils, which fixed their wages and conditions of work without consulting them.

A union by refusing to sit on a Council does not necessarily exclude its members from the operation of the Council's agreements. Previously, when Africans were not employees, the Minister could bring them under the scope of an agreement if he decided that its objectives were being defeated by their employment in the industry or trade.[18]. Now that they are employees, Africans are subject like other employees to the provisions enabling the Minister at the request of a Council to declare its agreement binding on all or specified groups of employees engaged in the occupations to which the agreement relates.[19]

The difficulty of reconciling the non-racial definition of employee with race discrimination appeared in the provision allowing the Minister to exclude from the operation of an agreement certain categories of workers, defined in the original Act as 'persons residing within any native area'.[20] In terms of an amendment made by the Act of 1981, the Minister may now exclude persons residing in any area described by him. Though the wording has been changed, the effect remains the same. By using these powers the Minister may exclude Bantustans and border areas from the scope of Industrial Council agreements or Conciliation Board agreements.

Whereas Industrial Councils were barred by the original Act Sections 24(2) 48 (12) from differentiating on 'the basis of race or colour', the amended Act adds the word 'sex' to the proviso. In other words agreements may not specifically provide lower wages or inferior conditions of work for women as compared to men. Real equality, however, will be achieved only through a determined struggle against the entrenched practice of discriminating against women because of their sex.

A more serious breach of collective bargaining principles is contained in a provision that allows a group of employers in an undertaking not covered by an Industrial Council to submit proposals regarding the wages and conditions of employees engaged in the undertaking. The Minister may, after consulting the Wage Board, make an order in accordance with the proposals, which thereby become binding on employers and employees in the undertaking, industry, trade or occupation and area as defined in that order.[21]

This is a serious threat to workers whose unions have rejected the Industrial Council system. The new provision enables employers in collusion with the Minister to bypass such unions and enforce the bosses' proposals throughout the industry without submitting them to the union or any section of employees.

At no stage are employees given an opportunity to study, comment on and object to the employer's proposals. This is *class legislation*. This blatant disregard of workers' rights is an autocratic violation of collective bargaining principles and is clearly intended to enmesh Africans in the labyrinth of the Industrial Council system and force them to register their trade unions.

Removal of job reservation

The repeal of Section 77 of the IC Act of 1956 is another measure taken by the racists to purge the labour laws of racial discrimination. Section 77 enabled the Minister, acting on the recommendation of the tribunal, to reserve specified occupations for members of a particular racial group. This section was described as "a safeguard against inter-racial competition".

> "Job reservation describes a system that the Nationalist Government introduced in 1956 to give white wage-earners an exclusive or preferred claim to selected occupations in industry, commerce and public services. It amounts to a system of sheltered employment and is operated by statutory and administrative discriminations against Coloureds, Indians and Africans."[22].

The Minister of Labour admitted in Parliament that this racial safeguard "was in conflict with all economic laws". He added that his Government's primary aim was to ensure the continued existence of the White race and not to maintain economic laws.[23] He went on to say:

> 'If we reach the stage where the native can climb to the highest rung in our economic ladder and be appointed in a supervisory capacity over Europeans, then the other equality, namely political equality, must inevitably follow, and that will mean the end of the European race."[24]

The dire consequences of what was called the "policy of integration" were spelled out by Dr. Diederichs, the then Minister of Economic Affairs:

> "The Black man will demand equal rights in the economic sphere; he will demand the abolition of the colour bar. He will have his own trade unions; he will make economic demands which we will no longer be able to resist and which will become stronger and stronger until eventually the economic power will also pass into his hands". [25]

It is good to remind ourselves that these emphatic declarations were made by the custodians of the great White race. Now the heirs and descendants of these custodians have repealed these vitally necessary provisions lock, stock and barrel. The entire Section 77 was deleted in 1979 by the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Act. This repeal is a staggering reversal of the principles pronounced in the 1950s as being of vital importance to the racist minority, and in particular to the ruling Nationalist Party, which claimed that it, and it alone, could defend white supremacy.

Government spokesmen give many reasons for their amazing turnabout, which was one of the main factors precipitating the crisis in the ruling party and contributed materially to the expulsions and resignations of the die-hard group of racists who recently formed the Conservative Party of South Africa.

The background to the reversal of the Nationalist Party's policies is provided in the reports of the Commission (Wiehahn) of Inquiry into Labour Legislation and the Commission (Riekert) into the Utilization of Manpower. Briefly stated their contentions include a plea for sustained and accelerated economic growth, a free labour market, maximum utilization of labour power, incentives to attract foreign capital, effective control of African unions and their integration into the official system of collective bargaining.

How can you have a free labour market in an unfree society? Paper reforms, like paper tigers, are far removed from the genuine article. There was a time, before the 1956 IC Act, when statutory colour bars were largely confined to the mines.[26] Yet so-called conventional colour bars effectively shut Africans out of skilled jobs in factories, transport, communications and construction. Whatever may be the reason for this turn-about, our task is to take advantage of it. mobilise the people for an attack on non-statutory colour bars, demand opportunities to acquire and utilise skills, and launch a widespread campaign against restrictions on movement and residence which impede the growth of an open labour market.

Ban on strikes

Strikes are illegal when workers withhold their labour in defiance of the procedures laid down by statute to delay and prevent strike action. Such delaying tactics, and the outright ban on strikes by Africans were formally imposed under discriminatory proclamation [27] and statutes [28]. These have been repealed.

Africans, being employees, are now exposed to the same constraints and penalties as other workers for taking part in illegal strikes. The operative measure is the principal Act of 1956. It prohibits any employee from taking part in a strike during the currency of a binding wage agreement, award or determination. A strike is legal only if the wage fixing instrument has expired and then only if the relevant industrial council or conciliation board has failed to settle the dispute. A further cooling off period of 30 days must elapse before the worker can legally withhold his labour[29].

Provision is made for arbitration or the holding of a strike ballot in certain circumstances. Strikes by employees of local authorities or those engaged in essential services are prohibited. Persons who incite or take part in illegal strikes commit an offence.

The Act introduces two important amendments to the anti-strike clause. Firstly it prohibits strikes called "for any purpose", thereby putting a ban on strikes that have a political objective (S65(1A) as inserted by S48(c), Act 57, 1981). Secondly a trade union or federation commits an offence by granting financial assistance to any person with the object of enabling him or inducing him to organise or take part in an illegal strike (S65 (3A) as inserted by S48(d) of the Act.)

The anti-strike clauses apply to all workers and trade unions, regardless of race and registration. All workers have the same interest in securing the repeal of the prohibitions.

Stop-orders

While subjecting unregistered unions to the same range of controls as those applied to registered unions, the legislature has withdrawn from the unregistered the right to operate stop-orders. The Act provides that no employers shall deduct membership fees from wages on behalf of a union which is not registered unless the Minister has approved.[30] "Membership fees" are deemed to include subscriptions, other contributions to union funds and any special levy imposed for a particular purpose.

Freedom of Association

The principal Act provides that nothing contained in any law other than the Internal Security Act shall prohibit any employee from becoming a member of a trade union or subject him to any penalty by reason of his membership. The Internal Security Act authorises the Minister of Justice to ban any listed communist from belonging to a trade union or taking part in the activities of a union. This scandalous violation of democratic principles and trade union freedom was introduced when Parliament in 1950 outlawed the Communist Party. The Minister then and subsequently used the dictatorial powers conferred on him to expel more than 150 trade unionists including some of the most experienced and dedicated leaders of the labour movement.

This blow against the Communist and labour leaders paved the way for a monstrous onslaught on the progressive radical wing of the labour movement, and for the ban imposed ten years later on the main organised force of the liberation movement — the African National Congress.

The Communists were pioneers of the African trade unions. They were amongst the first to organise African workers as far back as 1917 in the Industrial Workers of Africa, and remained in the forefront of campaigns to bring the unorganised workers, Africans. Coloured and Indians into the trade unions. For this reason and because of their Marxist-Leninist outlook they stubbornly resisted the imposition of racial discrimination, segregation and white supremacy attitudes. They denounced the exclusion of Africans from the system of collective bargaining, the harsh treatment of African trade unionists and militants, the division of the working class into racial camps, the racist arrogance of the white labour aristocracy, the ill-treatment and the apalling conditions of Africans on farms and in towns, and the abominations of job reservation in all its forms.

Now, after 30 years, the Government has, by implication, conceded the validity of the Communists' case that Africans have an inherent right to take part on equal terms, to organise trade unions, to take part in collective bargaining and to engage in all forms of employment. These concessions are hedged by many restrictions. The constraints are serious and narrowly circumscribe the value of the concessions. Nevertheless, the changes in the labour laws constitute a significant departure from the traditional racist practices.

It is true that the main thrust of the amendments is to control all unions — registered and unregistered. Minister S. P. Botha told Parliament during the second reading of the Labour Relations Amendment Bill: "We cannot allow a disorderly system to develop that will bring this country to its knees. . . The legislation provided for trade unions to become registered so that they could be part of the system", and someone added "A clamp on Marxists in unions at all costs."[32]

Earlier Botha stated:

> "Industrial peace is of the utmost importance to employers. . . as well as to the authorities. It should simply be ensured that trade union movements are not misused. . . the pursuance of foreign ideologies are an obvious attempt at overthrowing the established order".[33]

His statements fit into the regime's military "total strategy."

These amendments to our labour legislation have had a mixed reception ranging from outright condemnation by the racist Mine Workers' Union to warm approval from TUCSA — the reformist wing of the trade union movement.

Reforms and Reformism

Many African unions, more radical than most of the established unions in 1979, accepted the guidance given by SACTU and refused to register. But now many unions affiliated to FOSATU and CUSA, the two main trade union centres, have applied for registration. On the other hand there is radical opposition in some quarters to registration because the "reforms" are considered to be merely "cosmetic" changes.

A word on "reforms" and "reformism" is necessary.

Lenin explained that "revolutionary Social Democracy has always included the struggle for reforms as part of its activities".[34] He added that revolutionaries use agitation for economic reforms to raise demands for abolition of the autocracy, freedom and socialism. "In a word, it subordinates the struggle for reforms, as the part to the whole, to revolutionary struggle for freedom and for socialism".[35]

Agitation for reforms is a correct strategy when used as a springboard for revolutionary action. We must recognise that it is the decades of struggle, the accumulated strikes by workers, scholars and students, the struggles against mass-removals, high rents and bus fares at home and our campaigns against the regime, supported by the international labour movement and world progressive forces, that have forced the regime to remove the race discriminatory clauses in labour laws.

Unity is the key — Unity in Action! It is urgent to mobilise the workers, whether in registered or unregistered unions, in support of the following demands:

— to free all detained and imprisoned leaders.
— for the repeal of all restrictive controls in the Labour Relations Act.
— to build free and unfettered trade unions under dedicated leaders.
— for the right of collective bargaining outside the industrial council system.
— to build unity of the workers in national democratic industrial unions, to eliminate fragmentation and splits in the trade unions which are of benefit only to the employers and the regime.

It is time also to appeal to all progressive unions affiliated to TUCSA to leave TUCSA, whose leadership once again exposed the disgraceful reformism and opportunism of the organisation when, on the very day of Dr. Aggett's funeral, it declared that it "unhesitatingly distanced itself from any calls for industrial action with this specific tragic event". In the words of Johan Theron, general secretary of the Food and Canning Workers' Union, this stand was "a disgrace to any organisation purporting to represent the workers". The TUCSA leadership must be isolated so that the workers can move forward, advance the unionisation of all unorganised workers — the African miners, railway and harbour workers, the oppressed farm and domestic workers, the unemployed. Unity is the key — Unity in Action!

Now is the time to spread the concept of a radical, democratic trade union movement which will struggle for the victory of the exploited and oppressed working people for higher wages, better conditions of work, improved living standards and full democratic rights for all.

Footnotes:

1 I shall refer to this statute as the principal Act. The IC Act of 1956 is now called the Labour Relations Act, 1956, as stated in S60 of Act 57 of 1981.

2 Resolutions of the trade union conference August 8-9, 1981, Langa, Cape Town. Their opposition hardened after the violent death of Dr. Neil Aggett — the Transvaal Secretary of the Food and Canning Workers Union and the African Food and Canning Workers Union, while in detention at John Vorster Square Police HQ. They declared: "Talk of labour reforms means nothing to us when our chosen leaders are jailed at will and now one dies a violent death in the hands of the Security Police". (*Cape Argus* 5/2/82).

3 The South African Garment Workers' Union of White and Coloured workers proposed amalgamation with the National Union of Clothing Workers (NUCW) which consists wholly of Africans. The proposal was rejected by a delegates' Conference of the NUCW. (*Garment Worker* 13/11/81).

4 S(1) (XI) of Act 28 of 1956 — "employee" means any person (other than a native) etc.

5 S(1) (1) of Act 28 of 1956 as amended by Section 1 (p) of Act 57 of 1981.

6 S1(1) (XXXVIII) of Act 28 of 1956: "trade union" means any number of employees etc. read with 4(1) (a) of Act 28 of 1956: Every trade union may. . .apply. . .for registration.

7 S4(1) of Act 28 of 1956.

8 S4A of Act 28 of 1956 as substituted by S6(1) of Act 57 of 1981.

9 S8(3) of Act 28 of 1956.

10 S8(8) of Act 28 of 1956 as inserted by S10 of Act 57 of 1981.

11 S8 of Act 28 of 1956 as amended by S55 of Act 57 of 1981.

12 S61 of Act 57 of 1981.

13 S11(4) (a) as amended by S12(c) of Act 57 of 1981.

14 S10 of Act 57 of 1981.

15 *SA Labour Bulletin* Vol. 7 No. 5, 1 and 2 September 1981, p.34.

16 S18, S19 & S20 of Act 28 of 1956.

17 S21A as inserted by S20 of Act 57 of 1981.

18 S48(3) of Act 28 of 1956.

19 S48(1) (c) of Act 57 of 1981.

20 S5(12) of Act 28 of 1956 as amended by S16 of Act 94 of 1979 and substituted by S34 of Act 57 of 1981.
21 S5A of Act 57 of 1981.
22 R. Alexander and H. J. Simons *Job Reservation and the Trade Unions* Ch. 1 p.4, published by Enterprise, Woodstock, Cape Town 1959.
23 ibid. Ch. 2 p.7.
24 ibid. Ch. 2 p.7.
25 ibid. Ch. 2 p.7. Assembly Debates June 9, 1959 c. 7606-7.
26 ExceptiOns were the clauses in the Electrical Wiremen and Contractors Act, 1939 and the Black Building Workers Act, 1951.
27 The notorious war measure 145 of 1942 which remained until 1953.
28 The Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act 1953.
29 S65(1) of Act 28 of 1956.
30 S78(IC) of Act 28 of 1956 as inserted by S54(b) of Act 57 of 1981.
31 S78(2) Act 28 of 1956 as amended by S54(c) of Act 57 of 1981.
32 *Cape Argus* 12/8/81.
33 *Evening Post* 21/5/81.
34 *Collected Works,* 5 p.405.
35 ibid. p.406.

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No workers' movement or revolution is worth the bones of a single champion which ignores or excludes the vast mass of the workers of this country, the most flagrantly oppressed victims of the most glaring form of capitalist exploitation, the exploitation of the black races and their labour by white capital . . . And if the upper white artisans are not with these masses, they are against them, they are consciously or unconsciously kicking against the pricks of the proletarian movement they profess to espouse.

The International, April 4, 1919

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HOW I JOINED THE COMMUNIST PARTY

FROM SOWETO TO SOCIALISM

by Checkmate Maleke

Some people will be interested to know how one, just out of the June 16th generation, should have decided to join the South African Communist Party and accept the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, as the real way of solving the most important problems that face mankind today, and in our own situation those of racism and class oppression coupled with national oppression.

This came about as a result of one's participation in the liberation movement and conviction in the final victory of the South African working class over the forces of reaction. It was therefore during my humble contribution within the liberation movement headed by the ANC that I came into contact with the South African Communist Party and joined its ranks. The reading and studying of the Party's programme and scientific explanation of oppression and exploitation of our working class made me see a way out to real freedom.

In essence the reasons why I joined the Party are nothing else but scientific understanding of the interconnection and inseparable relationship between class and colour in S.A. and my life experience in that fascist apartheid monster.

The brutal exploitation and ruthless oppression of our black people by the capitalist class in S.A., using the apartheid system to further exploit and divide us, left a strong and deep impression on my young mind. Having gone through apartheid life like every African child, one saw the necessity of participating in the struggle to rid our people of this exploiting and oppressive monster called apartheid at an early age. As an African child and a son of brutally exploited working class parents, one had to undergo all the humiliations of apartheid, e.g. police brutality, forced removals and Bantu Education to name but a few.

Having been born and bred in the ghettos of Johannesburg, I experienced at an early life what forced removals in actuality meant. My parents having lived for their whole life in the Eastern Native township had to pack and go to Soweto as the superintendent ordered. Urban life and working class suffering were therefore part and parcel of my early life. Child labour was but a routine to us. All this influenced my political development very greatly. The love for our toiling masses overwhelmed me and this became one of the reasons that made me join the SACP as soon as I understood its aims and objectives.

The night raids of the 1960's by police looking and hunting for ANC and Party activists did not go unnoticed by my young mind. This forced me to ask a lot of questions when I became conscious of what was happening around me politically. I struggled to gain knowledge so as to answer questions which were troubling my mind.

Struggle for Knowledge

When we were in Soweto, I saw a more grim situation. Locations in this big ghetto were segregated. The African people were divided into tribal and ethnic groupings, a thing I did not know in the Eastern Native Township, where we lived as one with Coloureds. This struck me, and I asked the elders, who scared me by saying such questions are not asked for they are political and if I did not want to end up on Robben Island like Mandela then I should stop. The names of comrade Mandela and the communists were time and again raised when one was asking questions. Even at school I quarrelled with the Bantu Education teachers who wanted to know my tribal origins. In my previous school in Eastern Native Tonwship this was not known (and was not done).

Going to high school in the early 70's one was fortunate to meet new ideas which were flourishing. The ideas of Black Consciousness gripped our minds. Some of the questions I had asked as a young boy were partly answered. I sought for scientific explanations on certain questions but due to the limitations of Black Consciousness, none was provided.

Our parents began to come out of their fears inflicted in the Sharpeville massacre and started to play their role in educating us, and protecting us from the Radio Bantu propaganda lies.

I remember vividly when Radio Bantu was playing an anti-communist story on the radio, just after the Wankie campaigns, that my father banned us from listening to such rubbish.

The death of comrade Bram Fischer in 1975 played a great role in my political upbringing for people started to tell stories about him and explained what type of a communist he was. This then countered the racist anti-communist mass media which was full of such stories as 'Communist Bogey', 'Russian Threat' etc.

The defeat of the racists in Angola and the fall of the Portuguese fascist empire in Mozambique and Angola put all stories to rest about what Marxists were, as opposed to the racist propaganda. Our people greeted the defeat of these reactionary forces with great enthusiasm and some even spoke of the Russians coming to liberate us. The ANC and the Party activists in the trials held in the 70's also opened our eyes, for we saw that all those fighting apartheid injustice were named 'communist'.

The 1976 June uprising also played its great role for we finally came face to face with reality, when we were detained in prison, when the young boer boys still suffering from the MPLA victory referred to us as communists and called us other names. This then convinced me that after all a communist is a staunch enemy of oppression and exploitation. In exile, when I joined the liberation movement, I came to read the classics of Karl Marx, Engels and Lenin.

Inquiring about the Communist Party and its relationship with the ANC, I got satisfactory answers. Reading and studying the SACP programme and other material of the Party like *The African Communist,* Moses Kotane's biography, *Fifty Fighting Years,* I vividly saw what the communists were and what they were fighting for. This shaped and developed my outlook and secretly I wished that one day I should become a communist and join the Party. After coming into contact with known communists in the ANC and seeing what socialism was like in practice, all doubts in my mind were removed. I was recruited and I became the member of the South African Communist Party, the vanguard of the South African working class, a party with a glorious history of struggle.

Long live the South African working class!
Long live the glorious SACP!
Down with Imperialism and Capitalist domination!
Forward to the ending of exploitation of man by man!

"COLONIALISM OF A SPECIAL TYPE" AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

By Christos Theodoropoulos

The national question in South Africa has long been a controversial and hotly debated topic not only within the ruling Nationalist Party and the white liberal opposition, but also among all sections of the liberation movement. The latter has come up with a variety of concepts of the 'nation' which have resulted in conflicting strategies in respect of mass action, the factory floor and the battlefield. It is not an exaggeration to say that the conflicting answers to, and strategies for the solution of, the national question have taken their toll in impeding the broader unity of the oppressed that will bring down, irreversibly, the settler colonist and his state.

How many nations does South Africa consist of? Is South Africa made up of one, multiracial nation or many nations (i.e. one white, one Coloured, one Indian, 8-9 ethnic African)? Or, are there only two nations, that is, the white oppressors and the oppressed blacks? The issue is further complicated by additional questions such as: when did the nation(s) come into being? Is the South African nation(s) independent?

Different answers to these questions carry with them different tactical and strategic implications. A positive answer to the last question, for example, may render policies of self-determination and national liberation clearly irrelevant in the South African context. A negative answer, however, would give such policies an evidently pressing political priority. It is also evident that the implications for tactics and strategy stemming from different approaches to these questions extend not only to the national but also to the international front.

Colonialism of a Special Type

Ben Molapo has validly classified the existing different views under these broad headings: (a) the one nation thesis, (b) the many nations thesis and (c) the two nations thesis.[1] Of these, the first one is based on a misconception about the character of the South African society and, consequently, obscures the colonial nature of the state. The second one, whose adherents have significantly dwindled among the left, seriously underestimates the unifying forces at work among the African people, not least their collective struggle against the common enemy. On the other hand, the two nations thesis, which views South Africa as a colonial situation of a special type in the sense that an oppressor and an oppressed nation live side by side within the same territory, appears to reflect far more accurately the actual position. With regard to this thesis, however, Molapo has correctly pointed out that two interrelated issues have to be clarified: the colonial character of the state needs to be demonstrated and the meaning of the nation in this context to be defined.

It is possible that some peculiar characteristics of the South African geo-political system obscure its colonial character. For example, the classical geographical pattern which wants the colonial or metropolitan power far away from the colonial people, as was the case with, say, Britain or France vis-à-vis Nigeria or Senegal, is nowhere to be found in South Africa. Similarly, the old clear-cut distinction between the political personality of the colonial power (whether of the empire, kingdom or republican variety) and that of the colonial people (whether classified as a colonial protectorate, a colony, a mandate or, more recently, a trusteeship or a non-self-governing territory) is apparently lacking. By the same token, some of the economic characteristics of the classical colonial system of imperialism, such as the export of capital and the imposition of an unequal international division of labour, would appear to be superseded by some vaguely defined 'interdependence' or 'internal neo-colonialism'.

Admittedly, these deviations from the model might lead one to deny the existence of a colonial situation in South Africa and to regard the present South African state, the Republic of South Africa (RSA), as representing indiscriminately all 30 or so million people living there (if one does not, as one should not, take into account the 'independence' of the homelands) and to confer upon them a common personality. However the above obscuring factors, which stem from the complexities of the situation, can easily be made to disappear in the light of a consistent socio-economic and historical analysis. The crucial question to be answered is whether the very many changes that have taken place in the intervening period of almost three and a half centuries since the first colonial conquests in the Cape, are capable of altering the original symbiotic relationship between settlers and blacks.

Basic characteristics

An inquiry into the colonial nature of RSA should naturally start with an examination of the applicability of the basic characteristics of colonial situations as they are known to history. Thus, a colonial situation can be said to exist where a group of aliens, socially distinct from a given population, establishes and maintains, in conditions of market expansion, which first appeared in 15th century Europe, political, economic and cultural domination over that population through the use or threat of force. If the ingredients of a colonial situation are found to exist in South Africa, one should then proceed to establish that the special characteristics of the South African case, i.e. a colonial power occupying the same territory as its subjugated people, do not derogate in essence from the traditional pattern: a metropolis which is distinct and separate geographically from its overseas colony and whose population is, as a nation, politically distinguishable from that of a colony.

Historically, it is possible to have the above special characteristics. This is what in essence was the position in U.D.I. Rhodesia, where the white settlers, by declaring themselves independent, substituted in effect the colonial power (UK) by their own state (Republic of Rhodesia). Discarding for the moment the merely legal issue of non-recognition, it is clear that the fact of independence did not change the colonial character of their rule: the settler colonialists lived side by side with the oppressed blacks within the same territory. Hypothetically, the same situation would also have arisen had South Africa granted independence to the white settlers in Namibia.

In addition, the inquiry should always take into account that the colonial phenomenon, as any other social phenomenon, is an evolutionary system which has passed through various stages in its development, i.e. from a 'hunting or gathering trade' in its early phase to one based on agricultural and mineral production in its classical form, and from there to the more recent industrial manufacturing. This is important in explaining the correspondence of political changes in the direction of greater autonomy for colonial settlements from their metropolitan centres with the increased participation of these settlements in the international division of labour.

Dates that are not in the diary of the oppressed

The advent of the colonial period in South Africa cannot be separated from the expansion of capitalist markets, necessitated by the rising commercial capital of Western Europe at the turn of the 15th century, which eventually resulted in the increasing search for trading posts, raw materials and the early settlement of Europeans in the country. Fifty years after it had received its Charter, the Netherlands East Indies Company established in 1652 a settlement in the Cape which soon gave, in the classical colonial fashion, the impetus to the burghers' shift into the interior. This process marked the beginning of a two-fold development which continues unabated even today: constant inter-settler and inter-colonial disputes and intrigues, which invariably ended in a larger measure of local autonomy or even independence from Company or overseas metropolitan control for the settlers, on the one hand; and a deepening of colonial oppression and subjugation of the black people of South Africa as a nation, on the other.

Cape Colony. No sooner had the Cape settlement been established than the burghers demanded and were finally given representatives first in the courts and later in other bodies as they were created. As the Company rule was coming to a close by the end of the 18th century, this process culminated in the creation, after a series of settler revolts, of a number of short-lived, miniature independent settler republics in the inerior of the colony where armed conquest had literally reduced the indigenous people to serfs and slaves.

In 1795 the Cape surrendered to the British after war had broken out between France, with which the Netherlands had aligned herself, and Britain. It is clear, however, that this colonial succession simply replaced the colonial rule of the Dutch with that of the British and brought no change to the status of the indigenous people as a subjugated people. The reason for the inter-colonial conflict was the competition of two sects of European settlers for the labour of the Africans and the land they occupied.

With the exception of a short period from 1803-1806, the Cape colony remained under British control till 1910. During that period the constitutional-political history of the settler community took the following three forms of colonial management: 'Crown Colony Government' (1795-1854), 'Representative Government' (1854-1872) and 'Responsible Government' (1872-1910). Under 'responsible government' for settlers, the national oppression, dispossession and exploitation of the indigenous people was intensified and institutionalised. The office of the 'Secretary for Native Affairs' was created by the constitution, and new 'native' territories were either annexed to the Colony or made dependencies. The process of the formation of two antagonistic nations, each comprising a number of ethnic and linguistic groups which were formerly isolated from, or even inimical to each other, thus set in. This process was to be repeated in other parts of South Africa.

Natal. The Colony of Natal passed through similar phases. Towards the end of 1838 an unstable republic with a *Volksraad* existed around Port Natal. It was founded by a section of the Boers after they had trekked away from the Cape unable to solve their differences with the British; differences which were largely about laws for the treatment of slaves, the absence of 'adequate' compensation when their slaves were set free and the lack of protection against 'native attacks'. The interests of the British Empire, however, could not allow an independent state to grow up on the south-eastern seaboard of Africa. After some fighting, a portion of the Boers capitulated and the rest of them trekked northward to join their kith and kin beyond the Drakensberg. In 1844, the District of Natal was annexed to the Cape Colony.

Natal remained under the direct control of the British until 1910. During this period the settlers were initially raised to the status of a separate colony (1856-1893) and then were granted 'Responsible Government' (1893-1910).

All state bodies such as, for instance, the Executive and Legislative Councils, consisted of 'Europeans only'.

This form of imperial constitutional gradualism in both the Cape and Natal had, of course, little to do with the liberation of the South African people as the uncritical evaluation of terms such as 'responsbile government' might erroneously lead one to believe. On the contrary, it had rather to do with the need of devising localised forms of colonial control 'to keep the native in his place' and of providing for new forms of political organisation for settlers to accommodate, within the Empire, their growing economic and financial strength. In other words, *a larger measure of autonomy for settlers overseas was becoming necessary for the strengthening of the colonial system of imperialism as a whole.*

Boer Republics. The creation of the Orange Free State (1854-1900) and the South African Republic (1858-1900) as independent entities under Boer control were not exceptions, either, to the general settler drive for complete colonial subjugation of the territory. Colonial policies were pushed to new extremes, and the 1858 *Grondwet* was categorical: "The people (settlers) will not permit equality between coloured persons and the white inhabitants, either in Church or State" (Art.9).

History is full of examples of fighting between colonial masters for the control or redivision of colonies, markets and spheres of influence. The First World War — the culmination of inter-colonial fighting — ended with the taking away from imperial Germany of its colonies (Tanganyika, Togo, the Cameroons, Namibia, etc.) and with the redistribution of these colonies among the victorious imperialists. The Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) — where the global imperialist objectives of the British clashed with the parochial colonialism of the Boers — is but another example. It is, therefore a misreading of history to argue, as No Sizwe does for example,[2] that "the struggle led by the Afrikaans-speaking bourgeoisie. . . *marks the beginning of the struggle in South Africa for national liberation*" (Sizwe's emphasis). The beginning of the struggle for national liberation dates back a few more centuries when the first resistance was mounted against the invading colonialist settlers and has nothing to do with Anglo-Boer squabbles over other people's lands.

During the Anglo-Boer war, the Orange Free State was annexed by Britain in 1900 under the name 'Orange River Colony'. Similarly, in September 1900 the South African Republic was annexed to the British dominions receiving the name 'the Transvaal'. 'Responsible Government' status was conferred upon them in 1907 and 1906 respectively. Until

'Union' in 1910, the two settler colonies were ruled by white male British subjects and the inherited colonial and discriminatory state structures against Africans were reinforced.

The Union of settlers. Inter-colonial disputes over other peoples' lands and resources are never irreconcilable and do not reflect fundamental contradictions. The settler history in South Africa is no exception to this rule. The common fear of the 'native', who never abandoned the idea of decolonising and liberating his country, made a colonial alliance between the two main sects of settlers an urgent priority. Moreover, in the booming economic situation of the early 1900s, the rapidly increased inter-settler and inter-colony business transactions, the growing economic, social and cultural integration, and the consequent need to standardise, to minimise duplication and waste, to end old economic and commercial rivalries and so to avoid the recurrence of inter-colonial disputes, in short to maximise capitalist 'efficiency' and exploitation, also strongly favoured the idea of a formal union.

Following thus the dictates of their common interest, settler delegates from the parliaments of the four colonies finally came together in the *all-white* National Convention of 1908. There they worked out a scheme among themselves "on the most desirable form of Union" fully convinced that "the reward that will follow union will more than compensate *us* individually and *as a nation.*"

London sanctioned and registered, with minor amendments, the settler wishes. The South Africa Act of 1909 (the Union Act, in force in 1910), therefore, represented another colonial compromise in which the combined interests of European settlers were accommodated with those of British imperialism. Succession to Union status was effected with no change whatsoever in colonial legal and political continuity. The Union constitution, for example, expressly provided that *all* colonial laws in force in the several colonies at the establishment of the Union shall continue in force in the respective provinces (Art. 135). In other words, while on a formal level, the term 'colony' was replaced with that of 'province of the Union', substantially, the colonial essence of the system was left completely intact. The colonial dispossession of the African of his means of production and subsistence, and the accompanying migrant labour system, pass laws, racial discrimination, etc. were maintained.

Colonial Rule

Not unlike earlier exercises, the granting of a larger measure of political independence to the Union of settlers 'under the Crown of Great Britain and

Ireland' was soon followed by a strengthening and *unification of colonial rule* over the African people across the entire South African territory. These developments, however, consummated, on a pan-South African basis, a long ethnogenetic process, both in respect of the formerly divided settlers and the culturally and linguistically divergent blacks. They further accelerated the antagonistic development and cohesion of both the coloniser and the colonised and marked some of their special contemporary characteristics. For example, the agreement (embodied in Section 36 of the constitution) which traded a derogated status quo in respect of 'native' franchise in the Cape for the equality of Dutch along with English as an official language, materially contributed to the present bilingual characteristic of the settler nation. Other inter-settler agreements solidified the clear-cut distinction between the colonising and the colonised nations, whose respective roles were set out in no ambiguous terms: only members of the former ('British subjects of European descent') were entitled to participate in the running of the government at all its various levels. The entire black nation was treated as an object of foreign rule summarily under a single proviso:

> "The *control* and administration of native affairs and of matters especially or differentially affecting Asiatics throughout the Union shall vest in the Governor-General in Council, who shall exercise all *special* powers in regard to native administration *hitherto vested in the Governors of the Colonies*" (Art. 147).

Asserting its colonialist nature, the settler state soon went out to implement its expansionist ambitions outside the usurped borders of South Africa. Thus, the Union threw a covetous eye over former Rhodesia and the three High Commission Territories (Bechuanaland, Swaziland and Basutoland) with a view to annexing them, while, in 1915, she invaded and colonised neighbouring Namibia.

It is not accidental, therefore, that in the years that followed Union, colonial legislation and practices rather than independence measures rapidly multiplied, reaching unprecedented levels (made, in turn, 'necessary' by the special features of the situation) and encompassing every conceivable aspect of black life including family and personal life. Examples are too numerous and well documented to cite here. It is not also accidental that in 1912 the *African National Congress,* the first South Africa-wide indigenous liberation organisation epitomising the birth of a larger nation, was set up to unite the people "against the oppressive system of racism and colonialism". In an unprecedented act of culture, the

Africans came together so as to continue on a higher level the struggle for *national liberation* which they had formerly waged on an ethnic basis since 1652.

Westminster, 1931, and Republican status. Although substantive settler autonomy within the British Empire had been carried much further than in the other Dominions, the Union was, formally, by no means a fully sovereign state. This situation changed, however, during and after the First World War. The military contribution of the settlers to the Allied imperialist war effort gave them a claim to an independent status and, later, they were able to secure separate representation in the League of Nations. The remaining legal limitations upon the settler parliament were removed by the Statute of Westminster, 1931, and the subsequent Status of the Union Act of 1934. This Act openly proclaimed the Union as a "sovereign independent state" with is own flag and other paraphernalia.

Parallel to these developments, however, an onslaught was unleashed by the dominant nation on the precarious indigenous franchise where it still existed: in 1936 the insignificant number of 'native' voters in the Cape were removed from the common roll. In 1946 Indians in Natal were also removed from the voters' list and, in 1951, the common voters' roll for Europeans and 'non-Europeans' (Coloureds) was destroyed and two *mutually exclusive* rolls were created. Soon after, the Coloured people lost the vote altogether. With the National Party in power on a programme of racial discrimination and *apartheid* since 1948, the demarcation line between the two nations at present inhabiting South Africa became even more pronounced.

The settlers remained within the Commonwealth as an independent state until their expulsion in 1960. In 1961, following an exclusively white referendum, the Union completely seceded from the Empire (or what remained of it) and was finally converted from a monarchy to a republic, severing all legal links with the U.K. All public offices in the republic were filled by settler representatives and the new constitution did not effect any break whatsoever in colonial continuity. Nothing reflects the colonised status of the blacks better than their constitutional status: "The control and administration of Bantu affairs. . .shall rest in the State President" (section 8(4)). The Republic of South Africa, an independent settler state, reaffirmed its status as a colonial power in her own right.

RSA and the National Question

The various political changes which preceded South Africa's becoming a Republic have thus primarily an *inter-settler* (British-Boer) and *inter-colonial* (South African settlers-British imperialists) significance. Accordingly, these changes have not, and could not affect in any fundamental sense the colonial nature of RSA and its colonial relationship with the black people of South Africa. This relationship still persists today in all its essential characteristics and reflects colonialism in its highest stage of development.

Historical, political, economic, social and cultural evidence clearly points to the fact that the term 'RSA' does not comprise the total population of South Africa, but only the settler community and their descendants and can only denote the state of the white settler nation. *Vis-a-vis* the subjugated black nation, RSA is, therefore, the colonial power. A colonial situation which has the special historico-geographical characteristic that the colonial power and the colonial people both occupy the same territory, still subsists in South Africa. The claim that the term 'RSA' applies equally to both nations is refuted daily by reality. This claim is reminiscent of the ludicrous post-war French and Portuguese claims that 'their' African colonies were 'overseas provinces', an independent part of metropolitan territory. If accepted, this claim would also lead to the absurdity that, had the Union been successful in annexing Namibia in 1919 as its 'fifth province', Namibia would have been independent long ago!

It is thus correct to assert that "since 1652 when the colonialists first invaded our country, South Africa has never been decolonised and that Vorster and his ilk are the direct descendants of their colonial predecessors"[3]. Accordingly, the term 'RSA' does not apply indiscriminately to the two antagonistic nations inhabiting South Africa. It can only refer to the state of the dominant, settler nation. (The often used term 'minority regime' in this context obscures the colonial nature of the state; its use should, therefore, be avoided). The historically evolved black nation, however, validly lays claim over the entire territory of South Africa, but has been prevented till now from asserting control over it. It is, nevertheless, deeply engaged in a determined national liberation struggle (in the full meaning of the term) to do exactly that: to create its own independent state. Precisely because of the special features of South African colonialism, (i.e. that the usurper settler nation occupies the land of the rightful owner) the solution of the national question by the creation of the black independent state covering the entire territory of South Africa will necessarily bring the historical, political and legal extinction of the last bastion of colonialism in Africa, namely the RSA *as the state* of the settler nation. Members of the latter wishing to stay behind will acquire the status of a communal minority having all rights and duties generally recognised as belonging to such minorities and in accordance with the principle 'South Africa belongs to all who live and work in it'.

These grave implications, which stem from the inexorable reality of the two opposing nations, fully explain the importance given by RSA to its divisive strategy of splitting up the Black nation. It is in this context that we should evaluate RSA's tragi-comic and abortive attempt to grant 'a new constitutional dispensation', or a limited, tribal independence in instalments to preselected areas, the so-called Bantustans, which comprise only 13 per cent of the territory of South Africa.

Today the existence of a countrywide, single South African black nation makes it impossible to solve the primary contradiction of colonialism at the level of balkanisation or re-tribalisation. Thus the creation of any number of 'independent' Bantustans, even assuming they are run on populist or democratic principles, will not solve the national question in South Africa. Such Bantustans will remain illegitimate secessions until they have been brought back again. A permanent and just solution of the national question can be achieved only when the oppressed have collectively liberated the whole of South Africa and established their own state over the entire territory of South Africa.

The right of the single black nation of South Africa to self-determination has, therefore, primarily a clear anti-colonial content. It does not differ qualitatively from the same right that the peoples of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe, for example, have recently exercised. Similarly, the *national* liberation movement of South Africa, far from being a 'misnomer' or seeking simply to abolish *apartheid* and ameliorate the 'civil rights' record of the regime, has an anti-colonial, anti-settler character. The national liberation war — the highest form of the nation's unity — currently raging in the subcontinent, is not, therefore, a 'civil war', as some wrongly believe, but a truly international conflict between two distinct socio-historical entities for the control and exercise of political power.

The National and the Social Questions

The problem of different views on the national question at present facing the national liberation movement is sometimes compounded by their uncritical mixing-up with the social question. 'Revolutionary impatience' and left-communism are largely responsible for the confusion. No Sizwe's book *One Azania, One Nation — The National Question in South Africa* seems to have carried the confusion between such categories as 'nation' and 'class' and 'national' and 'social liberation' furthest.

In that work one may come across such statements as "the nation. . .(is) oppressed by the bourgeois rulers of the country" or "(National) Liberation of the nation (means). . .democratisation of the society. . .by the workers" or even that the struggle of "the working poeple (who) are expressing their right to self determination. . .assumes a national form". On the basis of this rather selective approach, "the nation. . .consists of all the people who are prepared to throw off the yoke of capitalist exploitation and racist oppression." This conception of the nation, which now exludes oppressors and exploiters be they African, Indian, Coloured or White, but without clarifying the status of these people in terms of the *national* question (do these exploiters form their own nation(s)?), becomes at the same time future-oriented: "The working class. . .is about to constitute itself as the nation of South Africa".

No doubt, there is a definite link between the national and social questions, but clearly this link is not founded on the above self-contradictory propositions. As any other nation, the black South African nation consists of antagonistic classes and subsumes the irreconcilable class interests of its component parts. It obeys the law of contradiction or the law of the identity of opposites, which determines the totality of the process at a given stage and indicates the historical necessity for change towards more developed forms of national and societal organisation. As a consequence, the relationship between the social classes composing the nation is characterised by continuous interaction, movement and change.

The *social* character of the independent black (national) state will be determined by the *class* that will ultimately lead the struggle for self-determination and independence. Which class will stand at the helm of the struggle for self-determination is of decisive significance for the content and social results of that struggle. In other words, the development of the class formation within the movement will determine the *content* of the national struggle (which will continue to take place against the opposition of the mass of white workers). The class struggle never in fact ceases even within an oppressed nation, even though the national question unites the classes of that nation for a common purpose, i.e. the gaining of national independence.

Thus, whether the new state will be a neo-colony or a people's democracy upon successful completion of the national struggle will depend on whether the pseudo-bourgeoisie and commission agents, or the working class and its allies are the dominant force. The examples of, say, Kenya, on the one hand, and Angola and Mozambique, on the other, can be revealingly contrasted. The relatively developed economic basis, the existence of a strong and increasingly organised working class, and the long revolutionary experience in South Africa hold good prospects that national liberation can be obtained on the basis of collective ownership of the means of production and workers' control of the national economy. In this complex process there are no mechanically understood stages such as first the solution of the national and then that of the social question. These proceed simultaneously, are dialectically linked and the one directly influences the other. As there can be no colonialism without capitalism in South Africa, so there can be no social emancipation without national liberation.

Notes

1. *The African Communist,* No 66, Third Quarter, 1976, pp.83 ff.
2. No Sizwe, *One Azania, One Nation — The National Question in South Africa,* Zed Press, 1979.
3. *Sechaba,* Third Quarter, 1978, p.4.
4. General Assembly Resolution 3411 G (XXX) of 1975.

AFRICA NOTES AND COMMENTS

by T. Singh and Phineas Malinga

KENYA: NO UHURU YET

It is a rare distinction for any African state to be singled out for its political stability, economic prosperity and prospects as well as for its adherence to western democratic practice. Whenever such accolades are showered on a country by governments, agencies, institutions and international finance-industrial corporations it is not unusual to want to enquire exactly why such favoured-nation treatment is being meted out.

Kenya is a case in point.

In May the Danish government announced a grant of 65m dollars to Kenya and an extension of loans amounting to another 26m dollars. The official Kenya News Agency at the same time reported a loan from West Germany of 10.35m dollars for the establishment and extension of industrial estates in the country. Early in June the United States and Kenya concluded a three-part aid agreement amounting to 26.6m dollars. All this underlines Kenya's standing as Africa's most credit and aid-worthy nation as far as western capitals are concerned.

But the most pronounced penetration of the Kenyan socio-economic system is by the United States. Trans-national corporations like General Motors, Colgate Palmolive, Chase Manhattan Bank, the First National Bank, the Bank of America and American Life, together with the inevitably present Coca Cola Company are deeply entrenched in the Kenyan economy. American investment is currently estimated at some 200m dollars accompanied by a rapid escalation in "development aid".

Politics and economics are inseparable, and Kenya certainly provides a striking example of this proposition. Kenya's avowed anti-socialist stance and policy, both internally and internationally, are the main attraction for international finance-industrial capital. But the real price for such a policy is the utter dependence of Kenya on the donor agencies, multinational corporations and their governments, not only economically, but politically.

As is often the case such cooperation inevitably involves military liaison of one form or another. Thus the United States is now heavily involved in the rearming and training of Kenya's defence force. More sinister is the role assigned to Kenya and the harbour at Mombasa in the US Navy's Indian Ocean strategy. Part of the aid granted to Kenya is to finance the expansion of the port ostensibly to ease congestion and improve the port's capacity to handle the movement of commodities more efficiently. This latter may well be one of the benefits accruing to Kenya, but the real reason for the massive modernisation program for the port is to afford the huge aircraft carriers of the US Navy easier entry and exit facilities for the purpose of policing the Indian Ocean (against whom?). At the same time Mombasa airport is to undergo extensive modernisation to cater for fueling, servicing and maintenance work for the war planes on the aircraft carriers.

Yet this is not the only way in which the government of Daniel Arap Moi is co-operating with imperialism. Kenya is not merely a passive recipient of economic and military "aid". There is much evidence in the aftermath of the attempted coup in the Seychelles to indicate that high-ranking members of the Kenya administration, including a Minister, were actively involved in the incident. None other than the President of the Seychelles, Albert Rene, accused the Kenya Minister of Constitutional Affairs and the Commissioner of Police in Kenya of being deeply implicated with the mercenaries, the former head of the Seychelles government, James Mancham, and the South African authorities in the attempted overthrow of his government. Whilst the Minister and the Kenya government have denied complicity, neither have been able to rebut the substance of the charge levelled at Kenyan involvement.

Truth, however, is a rare commodity in Kenya. Can we forget the murder of Josiah Mwangi Kariuki for his attempt to expose the corruption practised in the highest echelons of the Kenya government of the time?

Recently, Oginga Odinga, veteran anti-colonial fighter for Kenya's independence and the undoubted leader of the movement to re-orientate Kenya's socio-economic system to a non-exploitative, socialist system, declared that the real sufferers from the policy of dependency on foreign investment and the multinational corporations are the mass of the people. Despite the lavish "aid" and investment enjoyed by the Kenyan economy, there is widespread rural poverty, unemployment and social deprivation in Kenya.

"Africa is at the crossroads of development", he said:

> "In the 1980's the challenge for us is going to be how to build up open, humane, democratic societies. This in essence involves firstly the creation of viable non-exploitative economic systems. It also involves the creation of a responsible mass-based democratic political order. . . It is my conviction that the way to solve the problem of Africa's economic underdevelopment and dependence lies in the path of socialism."

In typical neo-colonial style the Kenya government reacted swiftly to reports emanating from London, where Oginga Odinga addressed a meeting organised by the Africa Committee of the Labour Party and the Party's International Affairs committee, that he was about to form a socialist party in Kenya. First, the Moi regime changed Kenya's constitution to make the country a *de jure* one-party state. Secondly, it expelled Oginga Odinga from the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU).

Political repression has been a feature of Kenyan political life since independence. Kenya became a de facto one-party state with the banning of Odinga's Kenya People's Union (KPU) soon after independence. Together with the stifling of all opposition to the rule of KANU went assassination — first Tom Mboya and later Kariuki. Currently a number of political prisoners are still in Kenyan jails for criticising the rampant corruption and economic mismanagement endemic in the ruling elite. For daring to expose the social and economic injustices suffered by the mass of the Kenyan people through his plays and novels Kenya's foremost literary figure, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, was imprisoned for 12 months and prevented from returning to Nairobi University where he was lecturing. What the regime fears from political activists who want to make the common labourers of Kenya the starting point of decisions and policies affecting their lives instead of capitalist profit applies also to artists who take their message of change to the people.

The recent attempted coup by elements of the defence force against the Moi regime is a signal that all is not well with this jewel of African democracy.

CHAD: NO ADVANCE FOR THE PEOPLE

The history of Chad has been among the most tragic in modern Africa. In terms of area, the Chad Republic is among the largest countries in the continent but the land is poor and supports a population of only some four million. This population is divided into several linguistic groups and there is also an important religious division, the people of the north being mainly Moslem while those of the south are mainly Christian. The broad, popular, nation-building movement which such a country needs had never been successfully constructed. Instead, the existing political movements are all strongly associated with different localities and with different religious and linguistic groups.

Under these conditions, the formation of a Transitional Government of National Unity, representing all the country's main political movements, offered the best hope of progress. This government was recognised by a number of neighbouring countries at a conference in Lagos in August 1979. Under the presidency of Goukhouni Oueddei, it included among its ministers the principal leaders of political movements, Abdelkader Kamongue, Hissen Habré and the late Ahmat Acyl.

When Hissen Habré left the Transitional Government and led his forces in rebellion against it, he shattered the hopes of peace and progress and condemned the country to another round of civil war. There was no internal force strong enough to hold out the prospect of a quick return to stability. In these circumstances, the Government invited Libya to send troops to assist it in suppressing the rebellion. The invitation received a positive response and the action of the Libyan troops was effective. They secured the capital and the bulk of the country for the Government, confining Habré's forces to remote areas in the north and east.

Any such invitation is bound to be controversial and this one attracted much criticism both within Chad and elsewhere in Africa. Yet there was a strong case in its favour. It gave the country a substantial degree of peace, and the Government used its resulting opportunity to embark upon broadly progressive policies. The Government also, in response to criticism of the Libyan role, agreed to the replacement of the Libyan troops by an OAU peace-keeping force.

Theoretically, this may have been a preferable alternative. In practice, the OAU force showed the same fatal shortcomings that have so often been witnessed in the case of UN peace-keeping forces. It adopted a wholly passive role in the face of breaches of the peace, with the result that the combatants soon realised that they could ignore it with impunity.

Meanwhile, those forces in the world which hate all governments of the left and in recent years seem to have reserved a special place for Libya among the objects of their hate, were preparing their revenge upon the leaders of Chad for daring to appeal for Libyan assistance. Hissen Habré received a flood of arms and money. Some of it may have been channeled via reactionary Arab governments but the ultimate source of it was the United States.

The OAU force has been withdrawn and the rearmed Habré has captured Ndjamena together with most of northern and eastern Chad. Whether he will be able either to defeat or to reach an agreement with Abdelkader Kamongue, who remains in control of the south, is yet unknown. What is clear is that his victory will bring no good to the suffering people of Chad.

MAURITIUS: VICTORY FOR THE LEFT

The rule of the Labour Party, which governed Mauritius from independence until June this year, gave the island 70,000 unemployed, an inflation rate of 50% per annum and the role of an offshore tax haven and tourist paradise dominated by South African interests. The principal opposition party, the Movement Militant Mauricien (MMM), underwent a period of severe repression in 1970-72.

By 1976, the writing was already on the wall for the reactionary Labour government. The elections of that year returned the MMM as the largest single party but a coalition of other parties under Labour domination was put together to keep the MMM out of power. Corruption, already a hallmark of the Labour regime, went from bad to worse, and in 1979 three leaders of the Labour Party broke away in protest. They formed the Parti Socialiste Mauricien (PSM), under the leadership of Harish Boodhoo, which went into the 1982 election as an ally of the MMM.

The election brought a landslide victory for the Left. The President of the MMM, Aneerood Jugnauth, is now Prime Minister, Harish Boodhoo is Deputy Prime Minister and Paul Berenger, trade union leader and MMM secretary general, is Minister of Finance. The new government has a socialist programme and is committed to the nationalisation of transport facilities and some of the sugar estates.

It is also pledged to obtain the return to Mauritius of the island Diego Garcia, which became an American naval base as a result of a series of disgraceful transactions. These began with the leasing of the island to Britain by the former government of Mauritius. The British then let the Americans in. The people of Diego Garcia were expelled from their homes and dumped in Mauritius, where they have for the most part joined the ranks of the unemployed. Paul Berenger has described them as "Africa's Palestinians."

During its years in opposition, the MMM more than once organised mass demonstrations against apartheid. The new government is determined to put an end to the humiliating role of South African vassal in which Mauritius had formerly been cast, and to join the rest of Africa in supporting the liberation struggle. Mauritius is, however, among the African states which will need help in order to reduce its economic dependence on South Africa before it can fully implement the policies of sanctions and non-collaboration.

The changes in Mauritius have been warmly welcomed by progressives elsewhere in Africa. The Tanzanians have declared that the causes of liberation on the Continent and demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean are significantly advanced. A close relationship between Mauritius and the Seychelles can be expected to develop. Socialists everywhere will watch the progress of the new government with fraternal sympathy.

MURDERED!

Ruth First was killed by a parcel bomb in Maputo on August 17. Petrus Nzima and his wife Jabu were killed by a car bomb in Manzini, Swaziland, on June 4. Joe Gqabi was killed by a car bomb in Zimbabwe on July 31, 1981. And there have been others.

All murdered by the South African security services. Those who call our South African freedom fighters "terrorists" are the ones who resort to terrorism and murder in defence of white supremacy. Murder of political activists. Mass murder in Namibia and Angola. Murder by night at Matola. Murder of detainees in prison cells. The dastardly and cowardly tactics employed by the racists and imperialists are typical of the foul system they defend.

We dip our revolutionary banner in honour of our fallen comrades. Their outstanding contribution to the cause of liberation in South Africa will never be forgotten. The struggle continues. We pledge to carry on the fight for a free and just social order in South Africa until final victory is won.

LENIN ON SOUTH AFRICA

by Prof. Apollon Davidson

Judgements directly relating to problems facing South African revolutionaries are fairly prominent in Lenin's general theoretical legacy.

Of special significance is Lenin's analysis of the specific difficulties facing the working class and the other revolutionary forces in multinational and, doubly so, in multi-racial states.

Consolidation of the working people in South Africa against the apartheid regime is, indeed, impeded by what Lenin defined as the "tremendous *estrangement* between the working classes of the various nationalities." He stressed that "this estrangement is a very great evil, a very great obstacle in the struggle."[1]

It would be hard to name a country where this estrangement and mutual suspicion did greater harm than in South Africa.

In many of his works, Lenin also referred to the difficulties revolutionaries encountered in countries of a motley national composition, showing how intricate and hard it was to work out the right methods for uniting the mass of the people there. And he noted the painstaking day-to-day efforts revolutionaries had to apply in such a complicated situation.

Certainly, there are other general theoretical judgements in Lenin's legacy of immediate relevance for present-day South Africa which South African revolutionaries follow in their struggle.

But Lenin also delved into concrete South African affairs, and examined their various aspects: first of all, the social-economic structure, the social struggle, and the national liberation movement. Studies of Lenin's legacy yield fresh confirmation of this.

Just three years ago, for example, new evidence was found of the interest that Lenin showed in the problems of South Africa, of the pains he took to get to the bottom of its problems, to understand them.

Associate workers at Moscow's Institute of Marxism-Leninism discovered that in November 1920 Lenin had asked for Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu's book, *The Black Problem. Papers and Addresses on Various Native Problems,* to be ordered from London. It had just come out in Lovedale, South Africa. He received it the following month.[2]

Jabavu's book was among the first, if not *the* first, to be put out by Africans in South Africa following the First World War. D.D.T. Jabavu (1885-1959) expressed the views of a certain section of the African population. And Lenin was interested in what people like Jabavu were thinking, though, of course, his interest ranged much farther afield.

Tradition

Lenin's intent attention to the problems of South Africa was a projection of the tradition that we witness in the works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

Widely known is Engels's evaluation of the Zulu victory at Isandhlwana in the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. The Zulus, he wrote, "did what no European army can do. Armed only with pikes and spears and without firearms, they advanced, under a hail of bullets from the breech loaders, right up to the bayonets of the English infantry — acknowledged as the best in the world for fighting in close formation — throwing them into disorder and even beating them back more than once; and this, despite the colossal disparity in arms.[3]

And we all know that the concluding words in the "Supplement" to Marx's *Capital* (Vol. 3), written by Engels after Marx's death, are devoted to South Africa and are a description of imperialist activity in southern Africa at the time of the "scramble for Africa".[4]

As for Karl Marx, he even wrote and sent three articles to *The Zuid Afrikaan,* one of which was published in that Cape Town newspaper in 1854.[5]

Many of Lenin's works could be adduced to show his interest in South Africa and its problems. Out of those written before the October Revolution, we might, above all, name: *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism,* and the notes and abstracts he made before writing it. We know them as his *Notebooks on Imperialism.* They contain a wide range of information about South Africa – the attitude of the ruling elements to the problem of labour power, inter-imperialist contradictions, colonial propaganda, population statistics, agricultural production, foreign trade, the gold rush, coal mining, railways, and foreign investments.[6] In his *Notebooks,* Lenin put down the titles of books and articles on South Africa that he wanted to read.[7]

In his "Essayed Summary of World History Data after 1870", Lenin listed the most outstanding events of the peoples' struggles in South Africa, as well as the actions of imperialism and colonialism: the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879, the highlights of the Anglo-Transvaal war of 1877-1881, the founding of the Afrikaner Bond, the founding by Cecil Rhodes of the British South Africa Company in 1889, the Jameson Raid (invasion of Transvaal by that Company's troops), the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902, and the rising of the peoples of South-West Africa (Namibia).[8] In his "Table of Colonial Seizures and Wars", Lenin put down the annexation by the British of Botswana, the discovery of gold in the Transvaal, and Britain's war against the Ndebele.[9] Indeed, South Africa is dealt with fairly extensively in *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* and in the *Notebooks on Imperialism.* The first time Lenin turned his attention to South Africa, however, was not in these works, which were written at the time of the First World War, but much earlier. South Africa is dealt with twice in the very first issue of *Iskra,* which appeared in 1900.[10]

The Communist International

The socialist and labour movement in South Africa attracted Lenin's attention at the time of the Seventh Congress of the Second International, held in Stuttgart in 1907. A message of greetings was received by the

Congress from Johannesburg, and there was a South African delegate in attendance, who said: "We adhere to the positions of international socialism".[11] And though the position of this delegate was not really consistently socialist, Lenin took note that a delegate from South Africa had come to that international socialist forum, and thought this fact significant.[12]

In those years, only white workers of South Africa took part in the international socialist movement, while Lenin was interested in the growth of the labour movement as a whole, and pointed out the weak sides of white South African trade unionism. In an abstract of an article in the October 1913 issue of *International Socialist Review,* Lenin wrote: "On South Africa (the Rand). Workers consist of Chinese, Kaffirs[13] and Whites (ruined by the Boer War). Endless tyranny by the British capitalists, the mine owners and the government. Little by little a class struggle of *all* the wage workers is developing, but slowly 'owing largely to the hesitant attitude of the conservative and narrow-minded labour leaders, who are still wholly in thrall to the old trade unionism'."[14]

Lenin's attention was focussed, by and large, on the situation of the black population and the struggle for its rights. The notes he made for himself are evidence of the close attention he devoted, for example, to the uprising of the Hereros and Hottentots. He made extensive notes, added his own comments and evaluations, and even wrote out the words of the song of the Herero rebels: "To whom does Hereroland belong?" and the refrain: "Hereroland belongs to us".[15] He also noted the unrest among Indians in Natal.[16]

Lenin wrote prolifically of those against whom the peoples of South Africa were fighting. The estimates he gave of what British imperialism was doing in southern Africa are indeed common knowledge. He examined the views and activity of Cecil Rhodes, and described him thus: "a millionaire, a financial king, and the chief culprit of the Anglo-Boer War". He observed that Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain "openly advocated imperialism and applied the imperialist policy in the most cynical manner", adding that they were Britain's "heroes of the day" at the turn of the century.[17]

Lenin saw the disparate forces oppressing South Africa — from the monopoly groups to the settlers who preached and applied racialism in its common day-to-day variety. He noted the urge of rank and file members of punitive squads to "rob the land and become landowners".[18] And in historian Albrecht Wirth's *History of the Modern World* he took special note of the following passage on South Africa: "Many settlers positively want an uprising in order to check the dangerous growth of the Kaffir population and deprive it of its rights and landownership."[19]

After the October Revolution, Lenin's interest in South Africa increased, especially so in connection with the founding there of the first communist party on the African continent, and the succession of class battles that gripped the industrial regions of Transvaal and Cape Town in 1918-1922. In 1922, Lenin wrote: "Not to forget South Africa, which recently reminded the world of its claim to *human* and not slavish existence, and by methods which were not altogether 'parliamentary'."[20] South African workers did, indeed, declare their claims in an anything but parliamentary way during the massive strikes in Transvaal in the wake of the First World War.

As earlier noted, new facts have been unearthed in recent years, showing the attention that Lenin devoted to the problems of South Africa. A 1970 volume of the *Lenin Miscellany* (Leninsky sbornik) contains Lenin's note to the secretary of the Council of People's Commissars, L.A. Fotieva, in the spring of 1920: "Get me (through Klinger) the report on South Africa".[21] Though a note of the editors of the collection says, "what report is referred to could not be ascertained". it is safe to say that the reference is to a report by Mikhail Volberg. Volberg had taken part in the 1905 revolution in Moscow, had lived in South Africa under the alias of de Velmont from 1913 to 1919, and had taken part in the South African socialist movement. In the spring of 1920, Volberg came to Moscow, to the Comintern, as the first envoy of the South African socialists.

The Rand Strike

Lenin's recorded telephone message of 18 April 1922 concerning the armed uprising of Transvaal workers is also highly suggestive. It was not published until the late 1950s in one of the later volumes of Lenin's *Complete Works* (in Russian). The message suggests that the Comintern Executive should raise "the question of sending a special correspondent or several correspondents from the Comintern to South Africa to collect the most detailed information and the fullest set of local literature, both legal and illegal, relating to the recently suppressed workers' uprising."[22]

Naturally, Lenin knew of South Africa's problems not only from books, newspapers, and reports. He had direct first-hand contacts with South African communists and socialists.

At the Third Congress of the Comintern (June-July 1921), during the preparations for the Fourth Congress, and in activities connected with the

Comintern in 1921 and 1922, Lenin met and associated with David Ivon Jones, one of the founders of the Communist Party of South Africa. Ivon Jones took part in the Third Congress of the Comintern, and was a member of the Comintern's Executive. He stayed in the Soviet Union for three years, from mid-1921 to mid-1924, and participated in sittings of the Executive and in the Comintern's routine work. At that time, he was called "member of the Comintern Executive from Africa".[23]

S. P. Bunting, leader of the Communist Party of South Africa, attended the Fourth Congress of the Comintern (November-December 1922), when on 13 November 1922 Lenin delivered his report, "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of World Revolution", the last Cominern report made by Lenin.

That was when S. P. Bunting learned that Lenin had read his article, "Colonial Labour Front", written by him for the Soviet journal, *Novy Vostok* (New East). Bunting was told that Lenin would like to meet him and discuss the article.[24] Unfortunately, the meeting never took place owing to Lenin's illness.

Lenin must have met other South African socialists and communists who visited Moscow in 1920 and 1921, such as M. Y. Volberg (Velmont), S. Barlin, and the Afrikaner Jacob den Bakker, who visited Moscow in 1921, and then went on to Tashkent to see how the Soviet system worked among the peoples of the East.

South African communists who met Lenin wrote a number of articles about him. After Lenin's death, S. P. Bunting published an article entitled, "Lenin: Personal Impressions", in the South African communist paper *The International.* It is the only first-hand account about Lenin by a writer from Africa.

S. P. Bunting also spoke of his remembrances of Lenin at a memorial meeting before the Town Hall in Johannesburg on Sunday, January 27, 1924.[25]

Ivon Jones wrote prolifically about Lenin and Leninism. He learned Russian and there is even evidence that he translated Lenin's works into English.[26] Among his many writings are the following major articles: "Lenin's First Book" (about Lenin's *What are the "Friends of the People" and How They Fight Against the Social-Democrats?)* and "Lenin's First Newspaper" (about *Iskra*). They appeared in four issues of the South African communist weekly[27] and in three issues of the London journal *The Communist Review.*[28] Following Lenin's death, Ivon Jones wrote another two articles, *"Lenin Immortal"*[29] and *"Lenin's Death and After".*[30]

Unfortunately, Lenin met only white South Africans. The first African from southern Africa to visit the Soviet Union came more than three years after Lenin's death. It was Josiah T. Gumede, President General of the African National Congress, who visited Moscow and Central Asia in 1927. And the first African communist did not come to Moscow until four years later — the Zulu Albert Nzula.

But the first article of the South African communists, which appeared in *Pravda* a fortnight after the inauguration of the Communist Party of South Africa, was devoted to the condition and struggle of Africans. It deplored the fact that no Africans were able to take part in the work of the Comintern. Written by Ivon Jones, the article said: "The Third Congress of the Comintern was attended by representatives of the Communist Party of South Africa. Unfortunately, there were no African delegates among them. This is due to the fact that travel for blacks is entirely impossible; it was also extremely difficult for white delegates."[31]

This article in *Pravda* was, of course, read by Lenin too.

Such are some of the historical facts showing the great importance Lenin attached to a correct understanding of the problems of South Africa and to the destiny of its peoples.

Notes

1 **V. I. Lenin, "The National Question in Our Programme",** *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 460.
2 *Biograficheskaya khronika V. I. Lenina* (Biographical Chronicle of V. I. Lenin), Vol. 9, Moscow, pp. 495, 534.
3 K. Marx, F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, in: *Selected Works* (in three volumes), Vol. 3, p. 266.
4 F. Engels, "Supplement to *Capital*, Volume 3", in: K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 3, p. 910.
5 G. G. Lawrie, "The Identification of an Article by Karl Marx in *The Zuid Afrikaan*", in: *Africana Notes and News* (Johannesburg), Vol. 18, No. 7, September 1969.
6 See V. I. Lenin, "Notebooks on Imperialism", in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 39, pp. 246-47, 286, 305, 306, 341, 425, 451, 453, 459, 471, 480-81, 483-85, 487, 520, 522, 554, 562, 710.
7 *Ibid.*, p. 40, 76, 459.
8 See *Ibid.*, pp. 688-705.
9 See *Ibid.*, pp. 511-515.
10 See *Iskra*, No. 1, December 1900.
11 *Internationaler Sozialisten-Kongress zu Stuttgart, 18-24 August 1907*, Berlin, 1907, p. 115.
12 V. I. Lenin, "The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart", *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 82.
13 In those days, the word Kaffir was in general use, and occurred in the article which Lenin was summarising.
14 V. I. Lenin, "Notebooks on Imperialism", in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 39, p. 594.
15 Ibid, p. 682.
17 V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in: *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 256.
18 Ibid., "Notebooks on Imperialism", Vol. 39, p. 682.
19 Ibid., p. 518.
20 V. I. Lenin, "On the Tenth Anniversary of *Pravda*", in *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, p. 351.
21 *Leninsky sbornik XXXVIII*, Moscow, 1970, p. 203. G. K. Klinger was executive manager of the Comintern.
22 V. I. Lenin, "To G. Y. Zinoviev", *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, p. 531.
23 *Rabochaya gazeta* (Moscow), (Workers' Paper), June 15, 1924.
24 S. P. Bunting, "Lenin: Personal Impressions", in: *The International* (Johannesburg), January 25, 1924.
25 "In Memory of Com. Lenin", in: *The International*, February 1, 1924.
26 E. Roux, S. P. Bunting: A Political Biography, Cape Town, 1944, p. 49.
27 *The International*, July 4, 11 and 18 and August 1, 1924.
28 *The Communist Review*, June 1923, Vol. IV, No. 2; June and July 1924, Vol. V, No. 2 and 3.
29 *The International*, March 14, 1924.
30 *The International*, April 4, 1924.
31 Jones, "The Condition of Negroes in South Africa," (Polozhenige negzov v Juzhnoy afrike) *Pravda*, August 14, 1924.

LIVING STANDARDS ARE FALLING IN AFRICA — VICTIM OF NEO-COLONIALISM

By Brenda Powers

With more than a decade and a half of political independence behind them, countries of sub-Saharan Africa are still, in a real sense, struggling to control their destinies. The problems inherited as part of the colonial legacy have been compounded and transformed during a period when the imperialist offensive has become both more subtle and more dangerous. The full impact on these countries of the current crisis facing world capitalism is now being registered.

The growing strength of the world socialist community of nations has opened the way for the meeting of the fundamental aspirations of the peoples. But imperialism has sought to adapt to the reality of post-colonial independence. In this context, it is instructive to look first at the scale of the problems facing Sub-Saharan Africa.

A recent United Nations report points out that between 1969 and 1979, per capita income grew by less than 1% in 19 African countries and actually declined in another 15. Food production in Africa fell by 15% in the 1970's. As a result, despite a doubling of grain imports during those years to 11 million tons a year, food consumption today is 10% lower than it was a decade ago.

Described as the poorest region on earth, Sub-Saharan Africa has a life expectancy rate of 47 years and an infant mortality rate of 25 per 1,000.[1]

Even in discussing those countries applauded for taking the capitalist road of development, western commentators are now chorusing on the themes of "energy crisis", "acute balance of payments deficits", "growing indebtedness", "slumping commodity prices" and "declining agricultural production". Countries such as Ivory Coast, Kenya and Malawi can no longer be held up as glowing examples of capitalist development.

These problems have in no way deterred imperialism from its goal of a flexible and comprehensive penetration into these countries and indeed reflect its continued capacity to maintain the former colonial territories as dependencies of the world capitalist economy. However the poliical and economic ramifications of the crisis demand new strategies by international monopoly capitalism. In understanding these we are reminded of Lenin's warning as to the nature of imperialism's offensive in the era of monopoly capitalism:

> "The *forms* of the struggle may and do constantly change in accordance with varying, relatively specific and temporary causes, but the *substance* of the struggle, its class content positively *cannot* change while classes exist."[2]

Monopoly capital continues to use the objective factor of increased economic co-operation among countries and peoples to get maximum profits through a divergent mechanism of international exploitation. But its means of doing this are being given a new and specific socio-political colouring.

Imperialist 'partnership'

During the past three decades, the west's major instrument of control over the development of the former colonies has been a policy of "assistance" whereby capital has been exported in the form of "aid". This policy as it is projected for the 1980's has been given a strong humanitarian hue and the imperialist ideological offensive projects western countries as meeting "vital human needs", and proffering "well intentioned advice" as to how to raise the standard of living of the peoples and reduce inequality.

Meanwhile, the development of the role of supranational institutions grows apace and these seek to define the "development priorities" of independent states. Within these organisations, such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), private monopoly capital is playing an increasing role. Attracted to these countries by its serarch for cheap labour power, rich sources of raw materials and of fuel, private monopoly capital is in need of large "economic areas" because of the growing intensity of inter-imperialist rivalry and increased competition between various groups of monopoly corporations. The general commercialisation of the west's economic aid indicates that imperialism is relying on market capitalist relations to integrate developing countries into the world capitalist economy. At the same time the trend of international finance capital to merge with the supranational financial bodies continues to increase.

The deepening crisis of world capitalism has led more developing countries to turn for support to organisations like the World Bank and the IMF. A specific role has been assigned to them, not only because they serve the penetration of international monopolies but also "because they establish direct linkages between private monopolies, and especially international monopolies, and the government agencies of western countries responsible for implementing policies of economic 'aid' ".[3]

The shifts in western 'aid' policies of the last decade have not changed the neo-colonialist nature of their relationship with newly independent states. It is the form of this 'aid' that has changed, in the sense that a substantial share of it is becoming less and less distinguishable from the usual commercial terms on which private monopolies provide credit. High rates of interest are an incredible drain on the economies of developing countries. The Kenyan government, for example, has projected that it will need an injection of capital in the next few years of 5 billion dollars in order to find a way out of its severe economic crisis. However, with a debt-service ratio running at almost 20% it is unlikely that the Kenyan Finance Minister will be able to reach this target.[4]

Western strategies for development

A recent World Bank report on development in Sub-Saharan Africa[5] underlines the extent of the region's existing indebtedness to the west. External indebtedness rose from 6 billion US dollars to 32 billion between 1970 and 1979, while debt service increased from 6% to 12% of export earnings in the same period. Their projections indicate a per capita income growth of only 0.1 per cent a year for the period 1980 to 1990.

The World Bank, like other organisations of its type, does not simply offer a flow of economic assistance. Tied to this are so-called policy reforms that are supposed to be introduced by the receiving countries. The thrust of these is towards limiting the scope of the public sector and "giving wider responsibilities to the small-scale indigenous private sector by allowing greater scope for decentralised cooperatives, and by defining an appropriate role for larger-scale private capital, domestic and foreign".[6]

Advising donors to channel assistance to small firms in industry and agriculture, the World Bank emphasises the need for greater use of financial intermediaries, especially commercial banks. Donor countries are also counselled to give support to 'changes in government policies' which stimulate the growth of small capitalist production in the region.

The actual nature of the pressure for 'policy reforms' belies the altruistic tone of the World Bank report. In Zambia where copper prices are low, foreign exchange reserves almost exhausted and investment has plunged, the IMF has produced some stringent conditions for continuing its aid package. One of these is reduction in Government subsidies. Following the reduction of the subsidy on maize meal, the staple diet of the Zambian people, its price rose by 37% last year followed by increases in the price of sugar, meat and milk.

Finding the way forward

It is clear that for the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa, the way forward lies in the development of a new world economic order, a goal that has been consistently championed by the policies and practice of the USSR and other socialist countries. Paramount is the establishment of effective control over the activities of international monopolies; an end to cyclical fluctuations in demand and supply on world markets and the establishment of equitable proportions in the relative prices of raw materials and industrial commodities.

The colonial legacy has meant that many African countries rely on a few commodities for all their export earnings. Changes in price levels on the world market can thus have a devastating effect. The Ghanaian economy's reliance on cocoa exports has been a case in point. Since the fall of Nkrumah's government in 1965, the world price of cocoa has remained a formidable block to Ghana's development. Earnings from cocoa have traditionally been a source of some 70% of foreign exchange. This year earnings from cocoa have again slumped and the resulting shortage of foreign exchange means that Ghana cannot import the spare parts and other goods needed to keep its infrastructure and industries functioning. In return for stand-by credit facilities, the IMF has prescribed devaluation and public spending cuts.

Slashing government spending in the public sector and thus depriving the people of basic health, education and other social services is a popular remedy offered by such organisations as the IMF and World Bank. In its report, the World Bank clearly states that "the only hope of broadly based provision of services in a self-reliant Africa is through greater emphasis on charging beneficiaries for the services they receive".[7]

Overcoming The Legacy

The formulation of concrete measures to overcome the backwardness of these economies in the interest of the peoples is fundamental to the achievement of genuine development. The depth and scope of social reforms have a determining role in moulding the character and specific nature of the accumulation process itself.

In discussing Sub-Saharan Africa, we are dealing with a vast area consisting of highly differentiated class formations both within and between societies. The legacy of colonial rule, the objective process of the internationalisation of production and the co-existence of two world social systems pose many problems and choices for these countries. In some, subjective factors have allowed for the beginning of a way forward towards the fulfilment of the aspirations of the masses — a road of socialist orientation. But even those countries which have not taken this path are forced by the reality of dependence and underdevelopment in their relations with the capitalist world to seek policies for Africa which must lead to a more equitable economic order.

A recent case in point was the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) Treaty of countries of Eastern and Southern Africa of December 1981 which developed out of the OAU Lagos Plan of Action of the previous year. This Plan envisages the setting up of new regional structures and the strengthening of existing ones to facilitate the eventual creation of an African Economic Community.

The PTA treaty provides the framework for the restructuring of the economies of the states in the sub-region through collective development of agriculture, industry, mining, transport and communications, human resources and energy. This grouping, as well as the Southern African Development Coordination Conference[8], are examples of the concrete steps being taken to find a way out of the mire of poverty and dependence.

Real development includes as indispensable components complete economic independence, social equality, the elimination of cultural colonialism and the exercise of full sovereignty over national economic resources for the benefit of the vast majority of the population.

The progressive forces of our continent have a lengthy struggle ahead towards the attainment of these goals. The ground from which they are able to wage this battle has been created by the achievements of the socialist countries. There is no doubt that the imperialists will constantly produce new weapons to impede this progress. However they are confronted by forces whose strength they neither match nor comprehend. Africa fights its battles in an epoch of transformation towards socialism and as Lenin underlined:

> "Capitalism in its imperialist stage leads directly to the most comprehensive socialisation of production; it, so to speak, drags the capitalists against their will and consciousness, into some sort of a new social order, a transition from complete free competition to complete socialisation"[9]

Notes

1. *Guardian,* March 18, 1982.
2. V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Vol 1, p.689.
3. E. Nukhovich, *International Monopolies and Developing Countries,* Progress Publishers, Moscow 1980.
4. *Guardian,* June 28, 1982. (The debt service ratio is the raito of interest and amortization payments to export earnings).
5. Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa; An Agenda for Action. The World Bank, Washington, 1981.
6. Ibid. p.3.
7. Ibid. p.43.
8. See "The Struggle for Economic Independence in Southern Africa", *The African Communist,* No. 88 First Quarter 1982.
9. V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works,* Vol. 1, p.649.

DOCUMENTS

A GREAT REVOLUTIONARY

Message of the South African Communist Party on the occasion of the Centenary of the Birth of GEORGI DIMITROV, delivered at an International Conference in Sofia, Bulgaria, in June 1982, by DR. YUSUF DADOO, National Chairman of The SACP.

Dear Comrades,

It is a great honour for the delegation of the Central Committee of the South African Communist Party, on behalf of the communists and oppressed working people of our country, to participate in this historic centenary celebration of the birth of one of the most remarkable figures in the history of the international communist and working-class movement, Georgi Dimitrov, the great leader and beloved father of the Bulgarian people. For me personally it has particular significance as the recipient of the high award of the Georgi Dimitrov medal, which reflects the high esteem in which my party, the South African Communist Party, is held.

The entire population of the People's Republic of Bulgaria will be joyously celebrating June 18 — a day on which they pay tribute to the life and work of this giant figure who played such a vital role in organising the forces which brought about the defeat of Nazism and Fascism and laid the foundations for the construction of socialism in the land of his birth. This wonderful country, Bulgaria today, with its beautiful capital Sofia, its rapidly advancing economy, its wealth of achievement in the spheres of education, culture, sport, indeed all social activity, is a monument and symbol to the life, work and ideas of Georgi Dimitrov.

Socialist Bulgaria is not a monument of stone, but an enduring, living and developing monument. We have every reason for confidence that socialist Bulgaria will continue to grow from strength to strength under the wise and dynamic leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party headed by our dear comrade Todor Zhivkov, general secretary of the BCP Central Committee and chairman of the State Council of Bulgaria. The foundations laid by Georgi Dimitrov are firmly entrenched in the hearts and minds of the Bulgarian people and will endure for all time, unlike many stone monuments which can be blown to pieces by dynamite.

Rise of Fascism

Dimitrov was one of the first to realise that, with the rise of fascism to power in Italy and Germany, the political perspectives had changed. Progressive and democratic mankind had to unite if the monstrous evil of fascism was to be destroyed. Nothing brought this home to him, and to the world at large, more forcefully than the Reichstag fire of 1933, a crime engineered by the Nazis and blamed by Hitler on the communists. In the framed-up trial that followed the fire, Dimitrov turned the tables on his accusers, and at the end it was the Nazis, not the Communists, who stood condemned.

Acquitted by the court, Dimitrov devoted all his energies to the building of a united front against fascism as the only guarantee against war, and the only safeguard for the Soviet Union and the world-wide forces of socialism against the imperialist counter-offensive. He exposed with devastating clarity the dangers of sectarianism and issued a clarion call for the creation and development of a broad-based anti-fascist united front throughout the world. Only the broadest unity of all sections of the people could achieve the defeat of fascism.

Dimitrov's call for a united front against war is still valid today, when the imperialists are threatening to plunge the world into a nuclear holocaust. There is today a most pressing and urgent need to develop a gigantic anti-war movement which will include communists, social democrats, liberals, religious leaders and intellectuals in the capitalist countries, and join them with the world-wide forces of national liberation and the mighty force of the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. Such a united force could effectively stay the hands of the most reactionary, bellicose, warmongering, anti-communist, anti-Soviet, reactionary circles of imperialism. We can all benefit from re-reading the life and work of Dimitrov in order to understand how to implement the policy of the united front in present day conditions. We must recall his insistence on mass work, mass activity, mass opposition, and the leading role of a united, disciplined and ideologically mature working-class movement.

Unity in Action

The South African Communist Party has benefited enormously from the teachings of Dimitrov on this point. Not only did we study and work to apply his principles before and during World War 2. We have remained loyal to them ever since, and are today building a united front of liberation in South Africa, based on fraternal co-operation with the African National Congress in the implementation of the Freedom Charter adopted at the Congress of the People in 1955, which is daily gaining fresh adherents among all sections of our people. This year 1982 has been declared by the African National Congress to be the Year of Unity in Action in the struggle against white domination and for the national liberation of the oppressed peoples. In the face of the increasing aggression of the racist regime in South Africa, directed not only against our own people, but also against the frontline states, the need for a united front against war in Southern Africa is daily becoming more obvious to all.

We recall that special attention was paid by the Comintern to the question of the struggles for national liberation in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. In 1935 the Executive Committee of the Comintern, in which Georgi Dimitrov played such a vital role, called for the setting up of broadly based anti-imperialist fronts as one of the primary tasks of the Communist and revolutionary parties, which were advised to adopt the tactics of co-operation with national-reformist organisations, of a closer coalition with the revolutionary parties for opposing imperialism, while at the same time preserving their organisational and political independence.

The decisions of trhe 7th Congress of the Comintern had a positive effect in ending the sectarian period of the Communist Party in South Africa in the early 1930s.

Despite his global responsibilities, Dimitrov always showed a great interest in the work of the South African Communists and highly esteemed the role and policy of our Party, as I was to learn from him directly when I met him at the time of the 5th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party in Sofia at the end of 1948. It was a rare privilege to have a personal interview with this outstanding Leninist revolutionary leader, a memorable experience to cherish and treasure, as indeed I do. Comrade Dimitrov showed a deep knowledge and accurate appreciation of the developments in South Africa and the problems facing our people.

Proletarian Internationalism

In his thinking and all his revolutionary activities, Dimitrov was first and foremost an internationalist. He saw the revolutionary struggle of his people, as well as the revolutionary struggle of each country, as but part of the revolutionary struggle on a world scale. He stressed:

> "Proletarian internationalism, far from contradicting the struggle of the working people of individual countries for national, social and cultural freedom, provides, thanks to international proletarian solidarity and unity in struggle, the support needed for victory in this struggle."

Genuine nationalism and patriotism was not in contradiction with proletarian internationalism. In the words of Dimitrov:

> "There can be no genuinely popular patriotism without international solidarity any more than genuine international solidarity without genuine popular patriotism."

He saw at all times the need for the working class to rally around the banner of the Party of Lenin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as the sheet-anchor of the international communist and workers' movement and around the Soviet Union, the first workers' state as the main bastion against imperialism and reaction. The sincerity and passion with which he believed in this stands out vividly in my mind of that memorable one and only meeting with him in 1948.

In a speech on November 6, 1937, on the 20th anniversary of the Great October Revolution, Dimitrov said:

> "The historical dividing line between the forces of fascism, war and capitalism on the one hand, and the forces of peace, democracy and socialism on the other hand, is in fact becoming the attitude towards the Soviet Union, and not the formal attitude towards Soviet power and socialism in general, but the attitude towards the Soviet Union which has carried on a real existence for twenty years."

The paramount need of the present time is for the unity in action of the international communist movement and the consolidation and strengthening of the three vital forces of our time — the socialist community, the national liberation movements and the working class of the capitalist countries — in order to meet the new offensive of imperialism under the aegis of the Reagan administration.

In the name of anti-Sovietism their aim is, not only to destroy the socialist community, but also to destabilise the national liberation movements and stem the tide towards social progress and democracy everywhere.

Attempts are being made to brand the African National Congress and its allies in the national liberation movement, including the South African Communist Party, as stooges of the Soviet Union. US Secretary of State Chester Crocker, testifying before a US sub-committee on security and terrorism on March 22, 1982, condemned the "terrorist activities" of the ANC and said that the ANC receives 90% of its military aid and 60% of its overall aid from the Soviet Union. In reply, the ANC issued a statement:

> "The derogatory reference by Dr Crocker to the just struggle for national liberation as 'terrorism' is but a feeble attempt by the Reagan administration at concealing its role as the mainstay of terrorist regimes throughout the world...Neither the ANC nor the Soviet Union made any secret about the selfless support that the Soviet Union, the Socialist Community and the progressive forces the world over are granting to the people fighting against oppression, exploitation and human degradation."

It is out of hatred for the Soviet Union, the socialist countries and the forces of socialism everywhere, the main bastions of anti-imperialism and anti-capitalism, that the imperialists launch their attacks on the national liberation movements throughout the world — in Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. It is because of their anti-Sovietism that the imperialists oppose the triumph of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, the advances of the people in El Salvador, and the growing challenge of the liberation forces in Namibia and South Africa. It is out of hatred for the Soviet Union that the imperialists back the genocidal regime in Israel which has embarked on a course of aggression and devastation in the Middle East, killing thousands of our brothers and sisters fighting in the ranks of the PLO and bringing death and destruction to tens of thousands of innocent civilians in the occupied territories and frontline states of the region. It was anti-Sovietism which brought Hitler to power in the 1930s and laid the basis for the second world war; it is anti-Sovietism which is leading the imperialists to back right-wing regimes everywhere and is laying the foundations for the holocaust of a third world war fought with nuclear weapons.

United Front for Peace

Faithful to the spirit of Dimitrov and his life's work, it is up to us today to recreate a mighty united front for peace and halt the imperialist warmongers in their tracks.

Georgi Dimitrov died in 1949 after a lifetime of magnificent principled struggle and achievement. Under his leadership the Bulgarian Communist Party was built into a force capable of constructing the modern and progressive Bulgaria which we see and admire today. On the centenary of his birth we honour him. But let us also note with pride that "without Dimitrov but on the road paved by him", the Bulgarian Communist Party, under the leadership of our dear comrade Todor Zhivkov, has maintained steady and unswerving progress towards socialism, raised the living standards of all sections of the people, adhered firmly to proletarian internationalism. Neither the Communist Party of the Soviet Union nor we South African communists have a more steadfast and reliable friend and ally, a true comrade in struggle.

We thank Georgi Dimitrov for his inspiration, we thank our Bulgarian comrades for their constant and reliable support for our struggle. Fortified by your example and your encouragement, we pledge to continue with our revolutionary work, side by side with you and our other comrades throughout the world, until final victory has been achieved and we have won and secured freedom and the prospect of a socialist future, not only for the oppressed people of southern Africa, but for all peoples everywhere yearning for liberation from the clutches of capitalism, imperialism, racist domination and exploitation.

Forward to a free and socialist South Africa;
Forward to a free and socialist world;
Long live the international communist movement;
Long live proletarian internationalism;
Long live communism;
Long live peace;
Long live the ideas of Dimitrov.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE BIRTH OF RESISTANCE

Battlefront Namibia, an autobiography by John Ya-Otto, with Ole Gjerstad and Michael Mercer (Heinemann, 1980. Price £1.95)

John Ya-Otto is SWAPO's Secretary of Labour and, according to the preface, the choice of Ya-Otto to tell "the story of Namibia's battle" was made by SWAPO itself. Ya-Otto's collaborators were members of the Liberation Support Movement, and the book is the product of three months of conversation and tape recording in and around Lusaka in 1975 and 1976.

It is a fascinating story of the growth of black resistance to white domination and repression. Born in Ovamboland, Ya-Otto was educated at mission schools, matriculating at Augustineum, the only high school for Africans in Namibia. As a schoolboy he was witness to the violence, bloodshed and death meted out by the South African police in their routine raids on the compounds of migrant workers suspected of pass offences or the illegal brewing of liquor. For throwing a stone at a dog set on him by white children, he was lashed by the police in the local charge office without ever being charged or brought to trial, warned that as "a kaffir" he must learn to be servile and obedient to whites of any age or status. He was beaten up by roaming gangs of drunken whites who had nothing better to do than pester Africans.

As a result of these experiences, "I became suspicious towards all Europeans, including the missionaries whose paternalism and jaundiced view of equality now seemed all too clear". Deciding he could never work for whites, he became a teacher in Windhoek, where he was soon involved in the dramatic events accompanying the government's decision to close down the old location and move the population to the new ethnically zoned township of Katutura.

Ya-Otto's first introduction to organised politics occurred when a leaflet issued by the African National Congress of South Africa was given to him by a friend while he was still at school. "It described how the whites of South Africa's ruling Nationalist Party saw themselves as the *herrenvolk,* the master race, how they exploited black people, how their police beat and harassed us. . . The crumpled sheet felt like fire in my hands; we'd be in trouble if someone caught us with this. Yet my eyes couldn't leave the page — what it said was true!" Later, during the agitation over the removal from the old location, he made acquaintance with the Ovamboland People's Organisation, the forerunner of SWAPO, and its dynamic leader Sam Nujoma, who opened his eyes to the need for a national organisation to fight for independence. Ya-Otto became one of Nujoma's lieutenants during the boycott organised by OPO of all municipal services, such as buses and the cinema, as well as the beerhall, to compel the government to give up Katutura.

The government did not give up Katutura, but drowned the people's resistance in blood. In the massacre outside the beerhall in December 1959, 13 people were killed and many more injured in a hail of police bullets, one of the victims being a friend of Ya-Otto's, struck down at his side.

"Why wasn't it I who had been killed? Why this man? What had he done? There was no sense to it. A black man's life was worth exactly nothing to the Boers. It didn't matter whether you were against them or not. I realized then, at a time when I should have been thanking God that I was still alive, that my own life was out of my hands. And if I could die at any time, I might as well die fighting. 'Bastards!', I said loud enough for the white foreman to hear. 'They think this is the end. We'll see, this is only the beginning!"

A few months later 73 people were killed in the police shootings at Sharpeville and Langa in South Africa. The tide of resistance was growing throughout Southern Africa.

In 1960 OPO was converted into SWAPO, symbolising the unity in action of the various ethnic groups of Namibia. At first the leadership put its faith in the United Nations, hoping it would take effective action to bring Namibia under trusteeship and eventually towards independence. But the government repression was intensified. Ya-Otto and a number of others were arrested under the Suppression of Communism Act, savagely tortured at police headquarters in Pretoria, and brought to trial in 1967 under the Terrorism Act specially passed and made retrospective to bring them within its scope. Ya-Otto notes that on the walls of the cell in which he was held in solitary confinement while under "interrogation" were scratched the names of Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, Mhlaba, Mkwayi, Nkosi, together with the slogan: "ANC Fight for Your Country!" An elaborate engraving depicted a spear-wielding Xhosa warrior pursuing a white man who was running for his life. In the background a big sun was rising, its broad rays reaching all the way to the ceiling. Across the sun, "Umkhonto we Sizwe. Mayibuye Afrika" was scratched deep into the hard cement.

"The more I looked at the mural, the more I felt privileged to be in this cell", writes Ya-Otto. The knowledge that he was following in the footsteps of the great revolutionaries of South Africa was a source of inspiration to him, helping him to survive his torture sessions. He made his own contribution to the wall paintings, scratching his initials and date and the slogans: "Namibia Will be Free" and "One Namibia, One Nation".

At the end of the trial, Ya-Otto was sentenced to five years, of which four years and 11 months were suspended. His comrades were not so lucky. Twelve, including Hermann Toivo Ja-Toivo, were sentenced to 20 years imprisonment and 20 others to life. One of the accused, Ephraim Kaporo, had died during the course of the trial from the effects of his imprisonment and torture.

On his release Ya-Otto was exiled to Ovamboland but was inevitably drawn back into political activity during the mass strikes of contract workers which swept the country in 1971-72. He was subjected to increasing police harassment, arrested and sentenced to six months on a charge of inciting to violence, and while waiting for his appeal re-arrested on similar but separate charges. Eventually his comrades advised him to leave the country, which he did in 1974.

Ya-Otto's autobiography, the record of one man's resistance to oppression, is typical of the wholesale politicisation of the Namibian people under South African occupation. It is anecdotal and a stimulating read, if at the same time non-analytical and non-ideological. It opens a window on SWAPO and Namibia which all should take the opportunity of looking through.

Z.N.

THE ROOTS OF APARTHEID

Working for Boroko by Marian Lacey, (Raven Press, Johannesburg R9.95)

This is a history of the policy pursued in relation to African labour by the South African governments of the Nationalist-Labour Pact period — 1924 to 1934. The author is concerned to explore the incorrectness of the belief that apartheid was a completely new policy invented by the post-1948 Nationalist regime. This she has no difficulty in doing. Not only do the roots of apartheid go back to the beginnings of imperialist domination of the sub-continent, but the system took, in many basic essentials, its present form during the period which Marian Lacey examines.

She shows that the Pact government was subjected to conflicting pressures from the different labour requirements of its two paymasters, the white landowners and the gold mines. The maintenance of reserves as reservoirs of cheap migrant labour was the mineowners' policy, which met with some resistance from the landowners. Though they have subsequently learned the use of migrant labour, their idea in the twenties was to reduce the maximum possible number of Africans to a state of total landlessness, so that they would have no alternative but to work permanently on the white farms.

The "settlement" eventually arrived at in the early thirties was essentially a compromise between the two main constituents of the ruling class. The abolition of the non-racial franchise in the Cape was merely one part of this compromise. Other elements included reaffirmation of the permanence of the reserves, extension to the whole country of the Natal system of bureaucratised chieftainship as a means of administering the reserves, completion of the edifice of "influx control" for the urban areas and a new Service Contracts Act to tighten up the system of serfdom on the white farms. The word "apartheid" had not yet been coined, but all the main features of the reality were there.

This is a book for historians rather than for the average reader who may not wish to follow the machinations of white South African politics half a century ago in all the detail in which they are presented here. For the historian, however, it has much value. The focus is not exclusively upon white politics; the activities of the ANC and the statements of its leaders at that time are also recorded, if rather briefly.

While the author's approach is not explicitly Marxist, it is compatible with Marxism. She looks in the right direction for explanations of political events and has assembled a good deal of the kind of source material that is needed for a Marxist approach to the history of the period. The book thus takes its place among the very small quantity of academic work being published in South Africa at the present time which one can envisage still being read after liberation. However, there is one rather strange omission on the part of the publisher: the book as no index.

P.M.

HOW WILL SOCIALISM COME TO AFRICA?

African Socialism or Socialist Africa, by A. M. Babu. (Zed Press, London, 1981, price £4.95 paperback).

Africa has always felt the need for a discussion on socialist ideas, their relevance to Africa, the definition of tasks, how these socialist ideas can be combined with the revolutionary movements in Africa — in short, the application of the theory of Marxism-Leninism to African conditions. This task has been tackled by the Soviet state and the international communist movement since the 1920's.

Abdul Rahman Mohammed Babu, a well known former political leader in Zanzibar, has attempted to achieve this task. Babu is well placed to do this since, as a former Minister of Economic Development in Tanzania (he was later detained), he saw neocolonialism in practice.

The book, which was partly written in prison as a result of discussions among detainees, raises serious questions which confront Africa today. It is anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and polemical. At times Babu seems impatient. he has no time for "petty bourgeois" leaders and "petty bourgeois intellectuals".

One has problems with this book. In a short review one cannot detail all the weaknesses, but the obvious ones can be mentioned. The book tends to simplify complicated processes posed by the African revolution and which face African revolutionaries. It does not deal with or even mention the Communist Parties of Africa which have done so much to analyse and help solve African problems. The liberation movements, in the broader sense of the term, are also not discussed. The book deals with the ideas of individual leaders — who propounded wrong ideas. Even on this point there are problems:

> "Nkrumah dies in exile, his unscientifically conceived hopes unfulfilled, because of his mistaken belief that he could play off America against Europe to our benefit. Not only did we lose Nkrumah, but neither Ghana nor Africa benefitted from his ill-conceived strategy." (p.111)

There are a number of such "controversial" assessments in the book. There are also problems with Babu's understanding of the international communist movement or rather of the socialist countries, especially the relations between the Soviet Union and China. His characterisation of the USSR and USA as "superpowers" reveals another dimension of diversity of thinking within the African left.

There is a need in Africa to make a thorough study of how countries with no Communist Parties and with relatively weak mass movements — and therefore with little scope for the spread of socialist ideas — can develop an anti-imperialist policy which will enable these movements and their leaders to assimilate some tenets of Marxism-Leninism as a step towards developing into vanguard parties. This process is contradictory and there is always the danger of distorting Marxism-Leninism by absolutising aspects of African reality and therefore declaring Marxism-Leninism "foreign" to Africa.

The tasks vary from country to country, depending on a variety of factors which are historical, economic, social etc. The African Communist Parties have contributed tremendously in their journals, newspapers, etc. and in their collective discussions to our understanding of some of these processes. Babu does not assess this wealth of material and therefore his book does not help us much in answering these questions.

But the very fact that Babu poses the question of a socialist Africa is a step forward in the history of political thought in Africa. The days of "African socialism" belong to the past and even the ideas of George Padmore, who saw Pan Africanism as an antidote to communism and the "future struggle for Africa" as that between Pan-Africanism and communism, belong to the dustbin of history.

This book should be read because it does reflect some of the problems which face the African left on a continent which cries for urgent solutions. To be better able to tackle these problems which face Africa we need to take a clear stand on politics, and theory is vital for that. Unless and until African revolutionaries overcome political and ideological eclecticism, our struggle is going to be even more arduous and costly.

Zanemvula

RIGHTS AND DUTIES UNDER SOCIALISM

Human Rights in Soviet Society, by Konstantin U. Chernenko. (International Publishers, New York).

Human rights as discussed in the West more often than not revolve around the questions related to individual freedom of conscience and choice. Who are able to enjoy these freedoms and so-called rights? Certainly not the overwhelming majority of the population. Their rights are related to the dole queues, slum stricken housing, rising costs of basic necessities, cuts in education and the health services — the list is endless.

How then do human rights in Socialist countries differ from those of the capitalist "free" world? Konstantin Chernenko, a leader of the Communist Party of the USSR, presents an authoritative view in this book *Human Rights in Soviet Society.*

The book deals with democracy, equality and freedom of the individual and includes and explains the relationship and integral workings between the organisations of the working people, the Soviets of People's Deputies, through which the people exercise their State Power, and the Communist Party of the USSR. The process of election is also dealt with from local to state level.

The author takes great pains to give an historical perspective of the rights and legislation which have been gained through the process of democratic centralism. The immense role the Party has played in securing and building the foundations for all nationalities within the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is of special importance. The setbacks and struggles that have been overcome from the time of the revolution onwards — when imperialism tried to "crush the baby in its cradle" — are also vividly depicted.

The socio-economic rights of Soviet citizens enshrined in the USSR constitution include the right to work, rest and recreation, health protection, social maintenance and housing. Further, among the most important guarantees of women's equality is the provision of equal opportunities in employment, pay and promotion whilst in addition the constitution provides special measures for the protection of the labour and health of women, and guarantees the creation of conditions enabling women to combine work with motherhood.

In the chapter on "Freedom of Conscience" the author deals more than adequately with the question of religion and points to the right of citizens to profess any religion and to conduct religious worship. Chernenko states:

> "Religious organisations have reaffirmed, at major forums, their sincere support for the Soviet social and State system . . . and their approval of the internal and foreign policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet State. Together with all the Soviet people, they come out for peace, for friendship among nations".

The author also deals with the questions of culture, education and creative work. In conclusion he quotes a statement by Leonid Brezhnev:

> "We have not yet attained communism but the whole world sees that our Party's activity and its aspirations are aimed to do everything necessary for the welfare of man, for the sake of man. It is this supreme and humane goal of the Party that gives it kinship with the people and creates firm and indissoluble bonds between it and all Soviet people".

The enemies of the Soviet Union and socialism prate of human rights as if they did not exist in Soviet society. Chernenko firmly places the question of human rights in their class context, showing that human rights are directly related to the sort of society in which they are practised. His book is indispensable reading for those wishing to understand what and how human rights are guaranteed under socialism.

M.A.R.

§§

Democracy is of great importance for the working class in its struggle for freedom against the capitalists. But democracy is by no means a limit one may not overstep; it is only one of the stages in the course of development from feudalism to capitalism, and from capitalism to communism.

V.I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution*

§§

THE MOZAMBIQUE REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION — FOR THE NATION TO LIVE THE TRIBE MUST DIE

From Nyawuza

I refer to the above article, written by *Spectator,* which appeared in *The African Communist,* No 89, Second Quarter, 1982. I do not know enough about Mozambique to make any significant contribution on the developments taking place there. But the article raises theoretical questions which go beyond Mozambique reality, questions which are of significance and relevance to Africa and therefore to us and the international community.

One thing which struck me in the said article was its sub-title: *For the Nation to Live the Tribe must Die.* This good-sounding slogan needs more explanation than it has been given by *Spectator.*

Two questions come to my mind: How does a tribe die? Are we not supposed to develop the positive aspects of "tribal organisation", the positive traditions, customs, cultures and languages?

The experience of the Soviet Union in solving the national question is very instructive. Let us take the case of Siberia. The Evenks, reindeer herders and hunters, were called the "wild Tungus" in Czarist Russia. (Today such names are no longer in use. Also gone are names such as "Great Russians", "Non-Great-Russians" and "inorodets", a non-Slavic people in Czarist Russia).

The Evenks have now adopted a settled way of life — as opposed to their nomadic habits. They now have a written language; they go to school and study at institutions and universities. They have not lost their national identity, traditions and customs. Even today they still engage in the ancient pursuits of their forefathers. While the younger generation builds brick houses, their fathers tend deer herds and hunt — an occupation which presupposes and necessitates a nomadic life, and they therefore live in tents during the cold winters of Siberia. This is the life they *choose* to lead.

On the solution of the national question I seem to go along with Xhakalegusha's assertion that "the task confronting progressive Africa — at least from the point of view of the national question — is not the abolition of national differences and ethnic diversity, but the acceleration of their abolition which can only come about through genuine democracy, that is, democracy which exerts its influence on economic life and stimulates its transformation and in turn becomes influenced by economic development." *(The African Communist,* No 79, Fourth Quarter, 1979).

The non-materialistic and therefore idealistic approach of the author of the article on Mozambique, an approach which borders on national nihilism, comes out clearly in his assertion that in Mozambique it was necessary to overcome the complexes of superiority (amongst the whites, and many Asians and Coloureds) and inferiority amongst the Africans. (His use of the past tense presupposes and implies that this problem does not exist any longer).

I agree with *Spectator* that political work had to be done to change what *Spectator* calls "old habits" which the people "had inherited" or which were "left behind by centuries of colonialism." But the problem is that some of these "old habits" are not that old — at times they are a reflection and manifestation of economic inequality and social disability that exist today. You cannot expect a domestic worker to feel equal to his "master" or "madam". Complexes, whether inferior or superior, as well as attitudes and even tensions, are bound to arise.

I fail to grasp the significance of mentioning that Frelimo does not honour the names of ancient kings and chiefs, "not even of those who had, in the circumstances of their times, best articulated the spirit of resistance of the people in the wars of defence of the land." (p.41).

Whether *Spectator* agrees with this or not, I find it to be confusion, to say the least. Even if all the streets can be given the names of world revolutionaries, that will not take away from the people their pride — a justifiable pride — in their language, culture, customs and progressive traditions, including those of anti-colonial resistance. Even if this pride is local, confined to a certain region or ethnic community, it is not necessarily "tribalistic". Even the anti-white feelings (which at times take the form of antipathy or hatred of the language of the oppressor) are *at times* not necessarily reactionary, but reflect the beginnings of an anti-colonial consciousness, an anti-racist consciousness which has to be harnessed and developed in the right direction. At times it is not even "the beginnings" if we consider the reasons why the Kenyan author Ngugi dropped his christian name James and "became" what he was, Ngugi wa Thiong'o. His plays and street theatres inKikuyu were bulldozed by government troops on the outskirts of Nairobi because they were attracting crowds from practically all neighbouring areas. By the way, the world renowned and revered Ngugi writes not only in English, but also in his mother tongue, Kikuyu.

All I am saying is that any internationalism divorced from patriotism (at times this manifests itself in nationalism) and from the level of consciousness of the people, to say nothing of the practical-political demands of the times, can — in our anti-colonial struggle — lead to an incorrect characterisation and assessment of the *two trends* in the nationalism of an oppressed people. The progressive trend in the nationalism of the oppressed and formerly colonised people should be viewed in the context of what Lenin called the "two historical tendencies in the national question" namely:

(a) advocacy of equality of nations, nationalities, ethnic groups, languages etc. and impermissibility of all privileges in this respect; and

(b) advocacy of integration, proletarian internationalism and uncompromising struggle against all kinds of bourgeois solution of the national question. There is a diabolical interconnection between the "two historical tendencies" and knowledge of which tendency gets priority at a particular time in history and revolution is vital.

My basic problem with the article on Mozambique is that it tends to identify or equate the national question with the class question. Theoretically this is not acceptable. Ismagilova, the Soviet Africanist, has made the important observation: while ethnic communities exist, ethnic interests exist too. This is what the Leninist science of ethnic relations teaches. You cannot propel or hold up this objective process artificially. The task is to give free scope to its natural development, governed by the principal of voluntary participation, equality and fraternal cooperation of peoples.

It is true that a class approach is fundamental to the solution of the national question, but there are questions such as the unconditional recognition of the rights of each nation to decide its own future or the right of nations to self-determination — including secession; the principle of equality of all races and nationalities, and this means genuine equality in practice between peoples, not merely a fine declaration; and, finally, a struggle against any manifestation of narrow nationalism or chauvinism.

I am not suggesting that *Spectator* does not deal with these principles, or rather some of them. The problem is that he is unsystematic and his emphasis tends to distort them and makes the problem more complex, because in Africa, unlike Europe, we are not dealing with nations but with nations-in-the-making.

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Soviet Union, let us study how they solved the national question. This is one country which carefully and systematically solved the relationship between the class-struggle and the national question. Though the class struggle was resolved in 1917, the Soviet Union — in 1982 — is still resolving the national question under new historical conditions.

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The Communist Party stands against the rich, and voices the demands of the poor; it organises and heads the working people in their struggle against the rich, in their struggle to secure better conditions of life.

Alpheus Maliba, 1939

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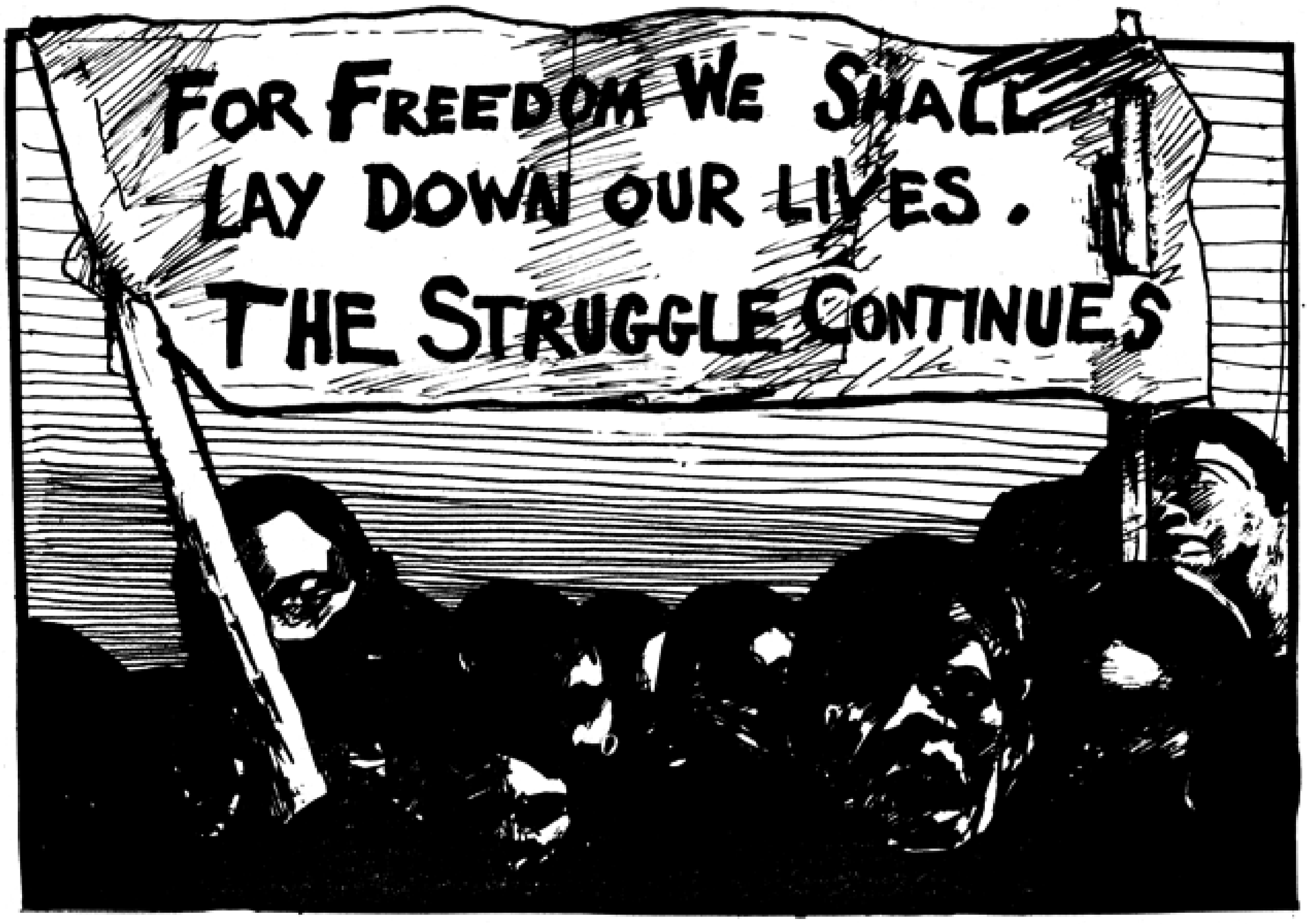

THE DANGER OF MILITARISM — WE MUST FIGHT ON EVERY FRONT

From Thanduxolo Nokwanda

The article: "Has the time come for arming the masses" published in the *African Communist* no 86 third quarter 1981 and an article under the same head published in no. 89 of the same journal raise very interesting questions. The articles are written by Mzala and Khumalo Migwe respectively. Both articles raise very pertinent questions regarding the conduct of our struggle. However, because of the premise from which the authors move or perhaps the way the articles are couched, they both degenerate to militarism.

Cde Mzala says:

> "...any talk of legal or constitutional forms of struggle is a non-starter...It is common knowledge that...the ANC have always sought peaceful methods of struggle...Non-violence as a strategy for revolution no longer strikes a responsive chord in the hearts of the black majority..."[1]

Before responding I would like to quote from the documents of the movement to show our understanding of armed struggle:

> "The communist party considers that the slogan of "non-violence" is harmful to the cause of the national democratic revolution. . . It rejects theories that non-violent methods of struggle are useless or impossible, and will continue to advocate and work for the use of all forms of struggle by the people. . ."[2]

> "When we talk of revolutionary armed struggle, we are talking of political struggle by means which include the use of military force. . ."[3]

It is clear from the above quotations that the use of all forms of struggle is central to the policy of the movement. Now to say we are theorising is to undermine the efforts of hundreds of our militants at home who are engaged in mortal combat with the enemy on the legal and constitutional level. Thozamile Botha before coming out was involved in the struggle using the 'legal' platform; Chief Sabata used the Bantustan platform for as long as he could; Cde Elijah Loza and comrade Lawrence Ndzanga died in their trenches operating within the recognised legal channels. The few I have counted are the ones that have been exposed. I am not calling for resort to legal and constitutional forms of struggle but we cannot regard them as useless.

Cde Khumalo Migwe in his article says "No serious farmer continues to grow plants in a field full of rats. He first destroys them and causes others to run away. . ."[4] He is referring to the problem of agents and stooges. Here we see the utmost glorification of the gun. The problem of agents is seen as a military problem and the solution is sought by military means. Firstly let me say the comparison is not an appropriate one. To think that agents are like rats that can be eliminated by the use of some very effective poison is to miss the point.

You can never eliminate agents completely. To think they will run away like rats is a dream. For as long as we struggle agents will be there. Although we will continue shooting and killing the most dangerous ones we will not allow ourselves to be diverted into concentrating our efforts on killing agents and stooges. The problem of agents and stooges is a political one. Some become agents through blackmail, others because of their class interests,others because they have been misled etc. The problem is inherent to struggle, it cannot be eliminated but it can be minimised or contained. As more and more of our people understand the aims and objectives of the movement the number of sell-outs will be reduced. The solution ultimately lies in our political line.

Out of Context

The major weakness of both articles is that they seek to examine an aspect of the struggle in isolation from the other aspects. The articles try to treat an important component of people's war, "arming the masses", in isolation from the general struggle and in particular from the political struggle. When you arm the people you arm them not for the fun or the sake of it but with a political objective in mind viz seizure of political power by the oppressed from their oppressors. Therefore when you arm the people (militarily) you do not arm any group of spontaneous strikers who are using stones to defend themselves. Quoting incidents of stone throwing to show that the time for arming the masses has come is in the circumstances not very appropriate.

When you give arms to the people those people must be submitting themselves to the guidance, leadership and command of the vanguard organisation. Both authors correctly point out that the opportune moment for an uprising is very important; one must never strike prematurely nor should one miss it. In practice this means that those who have the arms must be disciplined and must never pick up the gauntlet, even when the enemy throws it to them, without the direction of the movement.

Giap on the question of building an army says:

> "In course of the development and consolidation of our armed forces, we have had to solve the following essential political problems:
> —To ceaselessly strengthen the party's leadership, an exclusive, direct, and all-inclusive leadership over the people's armed forces; this is the most fundamental principle.
> —To ceaselessly strengthen political work, the source of the fighting power of the armed forces...
> —To ceaselessly consolidate the party's organisation and the system of political work from top to bottom.
> —To train a body of cadres absolutely faithful to the party's revolutionary cause competent in leadership, organisation and command.
> —...To apply correctly a freely accepted discipline, the iron discipline of a revolutionary army..."[5].

The question of arming the masses should not be treated in isolation from the building of a people's army:

"The realities of insurrection and war in our country show that arming the entire people means arming the broad masses and building up a people's army."[6]

I have already mentioned the question of command and leadership of the organisation in the arming of the people. This means therefore we should not dodge the main task of organising. Let us not use the banning of the organisation and underground conditions as a pretext for dodging organisation and mobilisation of the masses. (I am not one of those who connect mobilisation only with the distribution of pamphlets etc). Let us in our own situation and in our own way develop a massive political army from which we can build a revolutionary army and self defence units. Our goal is not seizure of power for its sake. What after? We must not only seize power but we must also be able to defend that power. That is why we must develop a massive political army and an army of the people and build a revolutionary army which is the shield of the entire people.

Both authors stress how important it is to treat this question according to the existing concrete conditions. But neither article attempts to relate the question of arming the people to the concrete realities of the South African situation.

The authors draw our attention to the question 'What is to be done?' What are our major priorities? I submit with due respect to them that our major priority is to strengthen our organisational capacity. We must strengthen our underground structures. We must not only have sympathisers all over the country, we must have activists all over the country. We must turn these thousands of sympathisers into activists of the movement, into people who not only understand that the system has to be destroyed but who know they have to destroy the system. The ANC must be established among the masses. Every street, every township, every farm. every factory must have an ANC cell, men who will give direction on behalf of the movement in times of action.

I do not want to enter the debate of whether or not a revolutionary situation exists at home but I want to emphasise that you will never find a model revolutionary situation. Even when the opportune moment comes, if the vanguard is not ready to lead the masses no revolution will take place. The question then is, are we as a movement ready to initiate action?

Are we ready to lead even those actions that are not initiated by us? The masses can be armed to the teeth but with no proper organisation and leadership they cannot overthrow their enemy.

What is the Reality?

Are the conditions waiting for us to organise ourselves? Why is it that MK cadres still "...go inside the country and carry out combat operations. . . ?" Why is it that the operation at Sasol had to be pulled off by people who are not workers there? Why is it that ". . .the initiative of the liberation process has not been transferred from the leaders in exile to the local leadership. . ."[7] Have we forgotten that initially we had an internal and an external leadership? What happened to our internal leadership?

Ours is a people's struggle. Everyone of our people is a soldier (or must be one). Every soldier whether armed or not must confront the enemy. We will never reach a stage when we will all be armed (with guns). But we must confront the enemy on all fronts to disperse his forces. Let us attack the enemy in the factory, in the farms, in the Bantustans and in the bush. Let us use the gun, strike action, boycott and every form of struggle and every weapon at our disposal. Let us strengthen the ANC and its military wing M.K. Let us organise.

"The people's war is a revolutionary war waged by the people and for the people. To speak of people's war is to speak of rousing the people, of organising them for the fight. When the people are *organised, armed* and *correctly led,* they are invincible"[8].

From the above passage it is clear that we must not only arm the masses but we must organise and arouse them. Organisation, mobilisation and the strengthening of our structures are matters which should take place simultaneously with the arming of the masses.

References:

1. *African Communist* No 86, 1981 p.85.
2. *Road to SA Freedom;* Programme of the SACP.
3. *Strategy and Tactics of the ANC.*
4. *African Communist* No. 89, 1982, p.81.
5. Vo Nguyen Giap *Selected Writings* p. 231.
6. Ibid p.447.
7. *African Communist* No. 89, p.80.
8. Vo Nguyen Giap *Selected Writings* p.137.

WE MUST EXPOSE THE COLLABORATORS

From Phila Ndhlovu

The Pretoria regime is determined to maintain white minority rule in South Africa and, with the support of its western allies, headed by the US, is building up its armed forces and weaponry on an unprecedented scale. The regime supports the splinter groups and reactionary forces in the newly independent countries, hoping to destabilise Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Seychelles. They are training, feeding, financing and arming terrorist groups in these countries.

The aim of the regime at home is to create support from among all sections of the population, including the Africans. For this it has turned to those people who are ready to work with them, offering them financial assistance to open chain stores, super markets, bottle stores and the like in the countryside and the locations. These opportunists and self-seekers are also drawn into the administrative apparatus to serve in the bantustanisation of the African people. Today it is no surprise to find a black magistrate, black mayors, black postmasters and other representatives (Izibonda) who operate in the name of the Pretoria administration. All sections of the population are now recruited into the army to defend the regime, something which was previously considered to be too risky by the ruling circles.

Special schools are built throughout South Africa where sons of chiefs and others are trained as the future leaders of the Bantustans. Trips are organised for prospective candidates to the US, Great Britain, West Germany and other countries friendly to the Pretoria regime, and scholarships are also made available to them for study in these countries. Meetings and talks are arranged with leading figures in these countries in the hope that apartheid will be accepted by the international community and in the hope that this will dampen the revolutionary spirit of the people of Soweto, Umlazi, KwaMashu, Imbo, Bizani, Maqadini and other areas.

The regime can never succeed in these objectives. Our prime duty now is to break the shackles that have kept our people in bondage for over 300 years. If some of us have managed to improve our lot and become members of the middle class, our duty is still to achieve the national liberation of our people.

It is painful to hear that a child has learnt nothing at school because the teacher has been under the influence of liquor all day. How painful to hear that a highly paid mayor is an African who protects the interests of the Pretoria administration in Soweto. Or again to hear that certain Bantustan leaders have set out to destroy our heroic freedom fighters, our sons and daughters who have dedicated their lives to fight and destroy the apartheid regime. These young freedom fighters want to implement the aims of the Freedom Charter so that there can be peace, democracy, equal rights and opportunities for all who live in South Africa. Landmarks in our history such as Sharpeville, Langa, Nyanga, Mkhumbane, Dimbaza, Soweto 1976, Welkom, District 6, June 26 and others must be kept alive and be a source of rededication to all in our ranks.

The national liberation movement needs young men and women, volunteers from Maqadini, Bizana, Imbo and other parts to join the fight against oppression. We warn those who have chosen to join or serve the Pretoria administration that the middle class that does not serve the interests of the motherland will always be foreign and will only be genuine if it is on the side of the people, if it joins the fight for revolutionary change in our motherland and for transfer of power to the people.

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The ideological and political content of opportunism and social-chauvinism is the same: class collaboration instead of class struggle; renunciation of revolutionary means of struggle; aiding 'one's' own government in its difficulties instead of taking advantage of its difficulties to work for revolution.

V.I. Lenin, *Socialism and War,* 1914-1915

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